

THACKERAY AMONG THE FRASERIANS

From a drawing by D. MacLisc, 1835

The Great
Hoggarty Diamond
Fitz-Boodle Papers
Men's Wives
etc.

By
William Makepeace Thackeray

Edited, with an Introduction, by
George Saintsbury

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INTRODUCTION

THE HOGGARTY DIAMOND, ETC.

The Great Hoggarty Diamond, like most of the work given in the last volume, belongs to the period when the shadow was most over Thackeray: and perhaps in a way it helped, all guiltlessly, to make that shadow darker. It was actually refused by *Blackwood*—one of the rare instances of utter and unaccountable mistake on the part of the usually keen-sighted conductors of that periodical. Although received and published by *Fraser*, it does not seem to have been liked by the public (a justification, some may say, of the *Blackwood* refusal), and it is said that the author was asked to cut it short. This is not at all improbable, for the latter part is certainly huddled up: and not a few things in it would have borne, and actually invited, expansion in Thackeray's best manner. Nay, its ill-luck seems not to have entirely abandoned it yet: for the preface of the 'Biographical Edition' volume in which it occurs says little or nothing about it, and one careful commentator on Thackeray has pronounced it 'dull'.

Its author, on the other hand, thought it the best thing he had written before *Vanity Fair*, and as usual he was right, even if, as in the case of *A Shabby Genteel Story*, he might have been in danger of a 'pathetic fallacy'. For, as he also says himself, his heart was very soft when he was writing it, with thoughts that, on Lord Chesterfield's maxim, might have made it hard.¹ Not merely his wife's actual

¹ *Le mal moral endureit le cœur autant que le mal physique l'attendrit.*

illness, but the loss of their second child a year or two earlier, as well as the pressure of want of money, have left their marks on it: there are not a few tears in the ink with which it is written. Yet these tears have made the record in no way thin or pale or washy; in fact the present writer's judgement of it was formed when he had little or no knowledge of the circumstances of its composition. If it is not so *perfect* as *The Second Funeral*, it must be remembered that it is creation and not merely criticism: if it has less power than parts of *Catherine*, it is far less unequal; if it has not the wilder humour of *Yellowplush* and *Gahagan*, it tries more difficult strings and does not fail in the trial. And that extraordinary fullness and variety of living presentation which was to be—which was already—Thackeray's great and almost unique attribute appears here marvellously to those who have eyes. The story is but a little one still—still only, as it were, a one-decker beside the regulation three. But in the crew of the average three-decker itself, during the three generations or thereabouts during which that noble craft swept the seas, men thought themselves lucky if they found one or two, extremely lucky if they found half a dozen, really live characters, neither hopelessly wooden nor merely replicas of something antecedent. Everybody in *The Great Hoggarty Diamond* is alive from fore-castle to cabin. The captain (to clench and drop the metaphor) is not the best of all, but that can hardly be helped. A hero who is also the narrator takes upon himself almost impossible difficulties: it is well if he gets out of them no worse than does Samuel Titmarsh. Mrs. Titmarsh, though she is hardly the heroine, and though of course the contemners of Amelia and Helen cannot be expected to admire her, plays her part well enough. The pathos of it and of the whole need not annoy any sensible person: it is not dashed and brewed to mawkishness in the fashion of some writers, and it certainly sets off the comic and satiric parts legiti-

mately enough. The richness and variety of these and of the characters that work them out are quite astonishing; Lady Drum of herself would almost carry the thing off. If you take her as a mere *menteuse*, half the fun is lost. It is quite clear that she did know something about the Hoggarties, though she romanced it up with a mere tissue of fiction. And all the other 'noble' characters, Lady Fanny and Lady Jane, Tiptoff and Preston (though the latter is slight and almost conventional), fit very well. On the other hand, the contrast of the Roundhands, Gus Hoskins, and the rest, supplies the foil in Thackeray's own special way, and they again clamour for comparison with such originals as they had in Hook and others.

But the author has not contented himself with a mere contrast of almost promiscuous manner-sketches. He has knit it all with another study of 'diddling', not now mere gambling, but commercial fraud of the kind which, never unknown, was becoming commoner than ever in consequence of the mania for companies. And all the studies here, from that extremely human swindler Mr. Brough downwards, are again admirable. Compare, for instance, the advance in Captain Fizzig on Captain Tagrag in *Cox's Diary*. They are very close, but the later figure is far less of a caricature, and, little as he has to do, more finished and 'signed'. As for Mrs. Hoggarty, the gallery of Thackeray's intolerable female creations—aunts, mothers-in-law, and so forth—a chamber of horrors in a fashion, but of most attractive and irresistible horrors to those who do not suffer from them in the flesh—a gallery effecting purgation by pity and terror like few—could most certainly not spare her. And over all there is the perpetual soft 'snowing of meat and drink' in the shape of delectable and memorable phrase and situation. From the rosolio and the history of the miniature onward the situations are inexhaustible and the language always more than matches the situations, while never drumming them in and bawling for attention

to them. It was the absence of this latter practice, I suppose, which made people so slow to recognize Thackeray; they had not sharpness of eye or fineness of ear enough to detect, and therefore they did not enjoy, the constant *doubleness* of speech and suggestion and allusion. Even for those who are more fortunate or better trained the supply is so plentiful and so unostentatious that there is no getting to an end of it. • You may read Thackeray fifty times and find something fresh at the fiftieth. But with a certain class of readers the enjoyment never begins: and it is not surprising that they feel themselves defrauded. The adventures of a mere clerk in a swindling company, who is himself not even a swindler 'Go to,' they say, 'this is milk and water!'

At the same time it would be distinctly uncritical not to recognize that there were some excuses for the readers of 1840 and thereabouts. In the first place, say what we may, there is no doubt that the two generations since (taking the usual intervals of thirty years at 1870 and 1900), nay, that even readers a decade later, had a great and illegitimate advantage—that of looking back at this early work through the later and greater. It is certainly easier to detect the virtues of Yellowplush and Titmarsh after they have been emphasized, isolated, magnified in *Vanity Fair* and *Pendennis* than to anticipate *Pendennis* and *Vanity Fair* from *Miss Shum's Husband* and *The Hoggarty Diamond*. Not only were the actual qualities lesser in themselves for the most part, and more mixed with defects; but they were presented in a manner perhaps not wilfully but inevitably suited to disgust or at any rate not to attract the public. Yet these readers cannot be wholly acquitted, and they undoubtedly represented an ebb-tide in appreciation. They were ill-served by their professional Mentors—general English criticism in the second quarter of the century is, with some great exceptions, far inferior to that of the first and third. Nor did they do

much for themselves. They had left Tennyson to 'ripen his wine', as the French say, for ten long years, without caring in the least whether he ripened it or not. They had turned an obstinately deaf ear to Browning. They mostly still thought Carlyle a crackbrained jargonist. They had welcomed Dickens, much less for his real genius than because everybody, from pit to gallery, could see that he was 'funny', and because he both harrowed and edified the gallery in the way they liked. 'Thackeray, on the other hand, was a puzzle : and the age, which was at least honest, was not one of those which feel that it is creditable to like puzzles. It did not care whether this was creditable or not : it knew that it did not like them.

Yet he went on undauntedly accumulating his proofs for the Order of the Spirit. That he would have done so without the pressure of necessity there is, perhaps, little reason to believe. He must in any case have drawn—it seems to have been as necessary for him to draw as to breathe ; and he must have furnished some of these drawings with the quaint letterpress which we know so well. He might, for his own or others' amusement, have expanded these things now and then into pieces like *The Rose and the Ring*. He was a great letter-writer as it was : when it becomes possible to collect all his extant letters they will form no mean body in bulk and an extraordinary one in merit. But as an independent gentleman or a place-holder, he would probably have rivalled Horace Walpole in epistolary quantity. Otherwise we should probably have lost him—a fact which may be pointed out but certainly need not be moralled on.

The little pieces which here follow *The Hoggarty Diamond*, though one or two of them slightly preceded it, are mostly trifles. *Rolandseck* and *Little Spitz* owe their origin no doubt to Thackeray's older Weimar experiences, refreshed by those of his recent visits to German baths in hopes of benefit to his wife. The better *Sullan Stork* is a fresh

plume in the mighty helmet of the invincible Major Gahagan. *Dickens in France* partly does the justice which Thackeray always liked to do to his successful rival, partly takes up that old theme of the 'Kean' article in the *Sketch Book*—the extraordinary fancy of the French for travestying English life, and taking the travesty quite seriously. The *compte rendu* of the play and its intervals is quite admirable : and if the 'thonging' of Jules Janin which follows, itself treats the matter with rather too much seriousness, there was some excuse for it. 'Honest Janin' (for Thackeray in his usual way became reconciled to him directly he knew him) is not the only French critic—nor the only French critic of the name of Jules—who has criticized English literature without being able to read it : and the practice is certainly not one to be encouraged.

But these things are little more than, in the excellent Carlylean phrase, 'honest journeywork in default of better.' Thackeray did not himself reprint any of them, though no doubt many poor people would have been glad to do so had they been theirs : and I at least should have been sorry not to possess *Sultan Stork* and *Dickens in France*. With *The Fitz-Boodle Papers* and *Men's Wives* it is different. These he took care to reprint (not quite completely, but nearly so) in the *Miscellanies* of 1857 ; they contain some of his best and most characteristic work ; and it may be thought surprising that he did not publish them separately very much earlier. But he had probably been disgusted by the comparative failure of *The Paris Sketch Book*, the *Comic Sketches*, and *The Second Funeral* : it is to be observed that *The Hoggarty Diamond* itself never appeared as a book till eight years after its magazine date and when *Vanity Fair* had turned the tide. As for these groups themselves, they are both due ostensibly to the new *eidolon* George Fitz-Boodle : and 'Confessions', 'Professions', and *Men's Wives* are in fact mere sub-titles. Nor is it quite superfluous to point out that the new *nom de guerre* and the

personage attached to it have a certain connexion with reality. Thackeray does not want to confine himself to burlesque of any kind such as Yellowplush and Gahagan could appropriately father. He is flying at higher game than the lower middle-class society, for which the Titmarshes were suitable till Michael Angelo left his Paris and London Bohemianism and established himself at Mrs. Clapperclaw's lodgings. Fitz-Boodile is of the clubs clubby, as Thackeray, not merely or mainly of his own choice, had been forced to be now for years. There is never so much of Thackeray in him as there is in Titmarsh the greater : but he has Thackerayan touches. Indeed, the people who go wrong in trying to identify certain of Thackeray's characters stock and block with real persons, might take a lesson from these various *eidola*. They always have something Thackerayan ; they never by any chance contain anything like the whole Thackeray. As he dealt with himself so did he with others.

Yet I am much mistaken if, in these Fitz-Boodile Papers, there is not something of a Thackeray more developed, more 'grown-up' than any that we have yet seen. In all that has gone before, even in *The Hoggarty Diamond*, even in *The Second Funeral*, there has been a certain youthfulness. The writer enters into his characters and their life with marvellous completeness and accuracy, but he does not yet quite dominate them. Here he begins to do so, and even in a way to dominate life itself, in that singular fashion which was to distinguish him later, and in which only Tourguénieff among still later novelists approaches him. To a certain extent this may of course be set down to the advance of years : for nothing in these two groups is earlier (as far as appearance goes) than the end of 1842, and some things in them are as late as the end of 1843. Nor was the Greek comic poet quite right when he said that 'number of years brings nothing but old age itself'. Still, eighteen months, merely

as eighteen months, is not much. It is impossible not to assign some influence to the sorrow and to the hardship through which he had passed, among the influences which made him know the earthly as well as the heavenly powers better. He has not, of course, deserted the comic, even the farcical: but farce and comedy are shot and shadowed throughout with a deeper tissue and atmosphere of 'criticism of life'. At first Fitz-Boodle is almost a conventional 'plunger': and his contempt of 'littery gents' and awkward exception of 'Oliver Yorke' form part of that rather clumsy *prosopopoeia* or *eidolopoeia* which has been more than once referred to. Even the 'Professions', though full of clever things, and in the 'gormandizing' case almost of the best class, may be dismissed if any one likes (though I should not like) as merely very excellent fooling.

But the 'Confessions' are much more. When he republished the group, Thackeray left out 'Minna Löwe', perhaps because of too close a personal touch (for there certainly does seem to be something of the kind), perhaps because he thought it over-farcical. But it was rightly restored, twenty years ago, for more than completeness' sake, inasmuch as Dorothea and Ottilia need that Ebrew Jewess to set off themselves and the tale of George Fitz-Boodle's misfortunes in love. Compare these things with the five or six years earlier *Professor*, good as that is, and the advance will be seen at once. Here, too, as for obvious and numerous reasons was fitting, does that 'Heinesque' character which has also been noticed come out more powerfully than ever—the cynical sentimentalism, the satiric romance, which seems to puzzle some folk so hopelessly in these two masters and which is so delectable in its amaritude to others. Nor should we miss one of those quaint infusions, if not of actual experience of actual conditions and surroundings, which go for so much in Thackeray—the episode of the polyonymous

Mr. Blake and the Mediterranean heath and Connemara. Thackeray had just been in Connemara when it was written : and, though only a German commentator will take the rest of the anecdote as autobiographical, it knits the old times of travel and of many other things to the new with that magic touch of association which only such knittings possess.

Another point, though of a different nature, must be noticed, because of its great curiosity. When the late Dr. Garnett republished Shelley's long lost *Victor and Cazire* I observed at once the extraordinary resemblance between the contrasted 'Willow-songs' of 'Ottilia' and one of the poems thus disinterred. Dr. Garnett, when I told him of it, acknowledged the resemblance, but thought it impossible that Thackeray could have seen the poem. I cannot in the least see the impossibility. We know that at Cambridge he was much interested in Shelley, when Shelley had only been dead less than ten years. There must have been copies of the book about : for we are told that something like a hundred escaped destruction, and that at least two reviews of it appeared. Why should not Thackeray have seen one, or seen the piece copied somewhere ? As not everybody who has a Shelley certainly possesses *Victor and Cazire*, it may be as well to print the piece. As will be seen there is no question of plagiarism whatsoever, but only of reminiscent parody. The likeness of rhythm and spirit is unmistakable.

Fierce roars the midnight storm
O'er the wild mountain,
Dark clouds the night deform,
Swift rolls the fountain—

See o'er yon rocky height
Dim mists are flying—
See, by the moon's pale light,
Poor Laura's dying.

Shame and remorse shall howl

By her false pillow—

*Fiercer than storms that roll

O'er the white billow ;

No hand her eyes to close,

When life is flying,

But she will find repose,

For Laura's dying !

Then will I seek my love,

Then will I cheer her. .

Then my esteem will prove,

When no friend is near her.

On her grave I will lie

When life is parted,

On her grave I will die,

For the false-hearted.

Dr. Garnett, though he had not noticed the ' Ottilia ' song, thought this piece might be the plagiarism from ' Monk ' Lewis which actually caused the withdrawal of the book. It is more Della Cruscan than Lewisian, I should say ; while everybody will, of course, notice the resemblance of the whole group to Fitz-Eustace's song in *Marmion*.

Men's Wives are more unequal ; and it is not, I think, difficult to discover the reason. The first, ' Mr. and Mrs. Frank Berry,' is a mixture of some of Thackeray's most favourite motives, handled in nearly his happiest manner. The ' Slaughter House ' reminiscences—still a little revengeful, but far from wholly so—and the fight are beyond praise : the dinner, the partial revolt of Frank, and his submission to his Angelica are not unworthy of their overture. And the whole has the right and harmonious tone which can hardly be given except by a man who is applying universal knowledge of humanity to a part of humanity which he knows *intus et in cute*.

But in the much longer and more important ' Ravenswing ' this is not quite the case. It also is full of good

things :—the ejaculation of Mr. Hooker Walker that the eyes of his beloved are as ‘big as b-b-billiard balls, by Jove!’ and the return from Richmond are only the chief among a hundred touches admirable in phrase and situation. But without sharing in the least the objection to ‘lowness’ one cannot but remark, not wholly with satisfaction, that the author has dropped back to his shady, his ‘shabby genteel’ surroundings, and that in doing so he has rather forgotten his present mouthpiece. Was George Fitz-Boodle exactly the sort of man to know all about ‘The Bootjack’ and the loves and quarrels of tradesmen? He might have known the Ravenswing as a *diva*; he might have heard a great deal of gossip about her; but this intimate chroniclership is not endowed with verisimilitude. The character-interest, too, of the piece is rather too much in the sense of a theatrical ‘character-part’. Nobody is other than human: it was as impossible by this time for anybody of Thackeray’s making not to live as for a coat of Mr. Woolsey’s not to fit. But the humanity is more typical than individual: more conventional and superficial than deep and ingrained; more French than English. And the result is that, though Morgiana is a good creature, one feels that her adventures are perhaps rather unduly prolonged, and does not care to see her through them quite as much as usual. In hardly any case, I think, often as I have read everything of Thackeray’s, can I take up a piece of his, small or great, without reading it through. I have read ‘The Ravenswing’ through more than once or half a dozen times; but I have also *not* read it through sometimes. A scene amuses; but you can lay it down.

Now I believe the explanation of this to be furnished by the actual postscript, which declares that the body of the piece was ‘written a long time since’. Without internal evidence it would of course be extremely innocent to take this as evidence: but it happens to confirm the

internal evidence and be confirmed by it remarkably. 'The Ravenswing' bears all the appearance of a piece written at least as early as *A Shabby Genteel Story* in the main, but doctored with some more modern touches—the passage about 'Members deceased' in Clubs is only one of a dozen—and put by the author under the cloak of Fitz-Boodle when it had been proved that the magazine public did not dislike the cut of that jib.

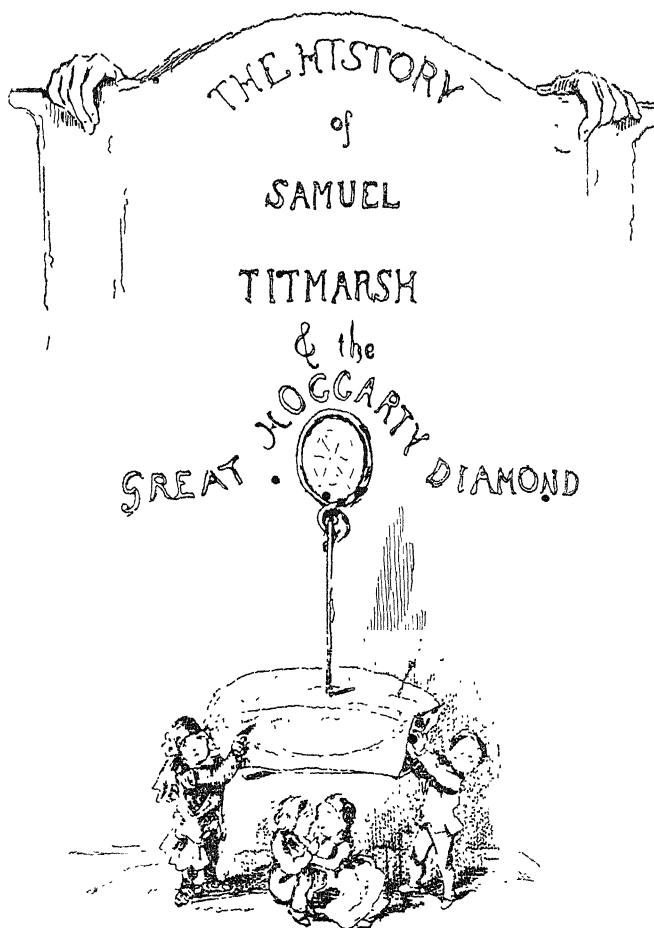
On the other hand 'Dennis Haggarty's Wife' is certified as not much earlier than the date of its appearance by evidence of two different kinds. On the face of it it could not have been written before Thackeray's Irish tour of 1842—the description of the Irish part is too fresh and vivid. But the manner of it would give bail for its maturity if there were no such circumstantial corroboration. It is, of course, not long—a trifle some would call it. But where has even Thackeray exhibited better that dreadful irony of fate of which his delineation is always so much more effective than the plasterings with gloom and grime in which our later pessimists have indulged? He never did a maturer thing: though he has dashed the strokes with something of passion. Indeed, none of his numerous pictures of connexions by marriage has a more vivid quality—goes more 'to the blood', as the good old phrase went, than this. If we had that story which has never yet been told but which he says¹ he told to the lady at dinner 'between the entrées and the roast', we should know all about it; but as it is we can only guess.

As to the fourth, 'The ——'s Wife' (which he did not himself reprint, though it was reprinted in America during his lifetime, and which has only recently been added to his works in England), it does not seem to me at all unworthy of its company. It has the German stamp which is on so much of the Fitz-Boodle division: it is effectively told: and Angelica Diabolica has already something of

¹ In the *Roundabout* on 'Two Children in Black'.

Beatrice in her. Probably he thought that there was too much romance in it and not quite enough : while on the other hand there was not enough satire of romance. Perhaps he had—I do not know—gone closer to some German or French original than he cared to do in a piece not burlesqued. But though the thing is no wonder, it is quite good enough to resume its original place in the quartette, which it indeed completes rather artistically. For ‘Mr. and Mrs. Frank Berry’ is comedy with the mildest tragic touch, and some farce to compensate for this; ‘The Ravenswing’ is ungenteel comedy, farcical too; ‘Dennis Haggarty’ is pure tragedy with only the permissible lighter overture; and ‘The ——’s Wife’ comes in well to these with its romantic tragedy only blended with a satiric grimness. Altogether Mr. George Fitz-Boodle served his creator well : and one is rather sorry that that creator’s pencil was less busy with him than his pen. For some reason, or none, there is hardly any part of Thackeray’s writings so destitute of light from ‘the author’s own candles’ as that written under Fitz-Boodle’s name : and unless I am deceived we do not even know what he was like in the flesh.

* * * *Note*.—This may be as good a place as another for noticing a difficulty which occurs almost *passim*. It is well known that Thackeray, though in no bad sense a careless writer, is a curiously *incurious* one : and that especially in those writings which he did not himself reprint, small slips abound. Thus in the present volume (p. 162) he writes ‘*Juliana*’ for ‘*Henrietta*’ Petowker, and varies Walker’s debt to Baroski (pp. 391 to 401) from 120 to 220 guineas. Where these things are mere evident slips of pen or press they have been corrected, but not otherwise—the plan of the edition not including full annotation.



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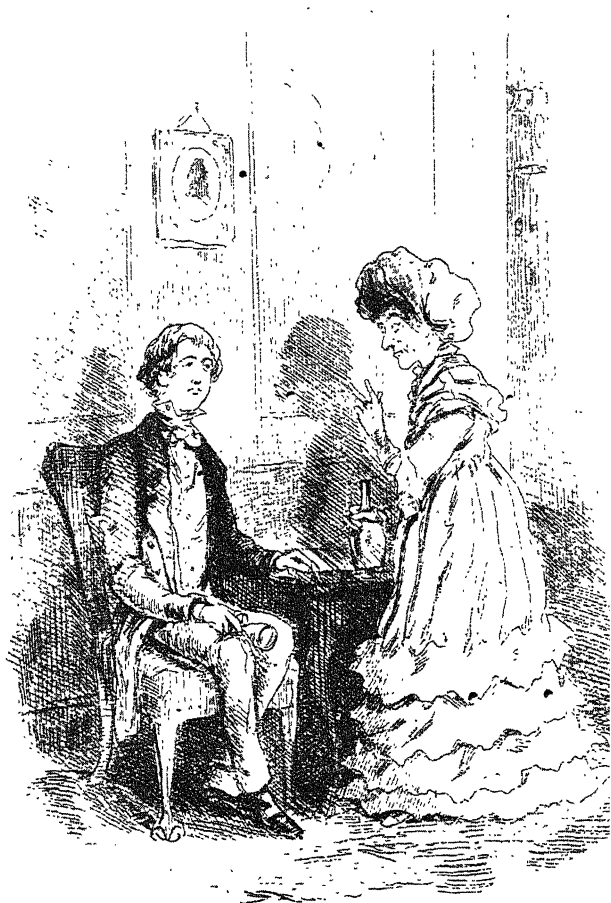
1849

[Facsimile of the original Title-page]

THE
HISTORY OF SAMUEL TITMARSH
AND THE
GREAT HOGGARTY DIAMOND

EDITED AND ILLUSTRATED BY SAM'S COUSIN, MICHAEL ANGELO

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The Rosolio

PREFACE TO THE 1849 EDITION

My kind friends, the publishers of this little book, appear to have a very high opinion of the virtue of prefaces, and demand one for the present occasion in terms so urgent that it is impossible to refuse a compliance with their petition.

The story appeared originally in *Fraser's Magazine* in the year 1841, and was written at a time when the writer himself was suffering under the severest personal grief and calamity. Those who are curious in such points of literary biography may thus account for a certain sobriety and melancholy which pervades this little tale. As I read it myself, after a seven years' lapse, I can recall the circumstances under which it was written, other than those on the paper, which accompanied the author through his work.

The tale, which was always a favourite with its writer, was not particularly well received at the time of its first appearance; or noticed, except by one or two persons, one of them the late John Sterling; who wrote me a letter concerning it, which gave me at that time a great comfort and pleasure. Other literary aspirants may be consoled for their own failures by hearing that this story was refused by one magazine before it found a place in *Fraser*; nor was it until the success of *Vanity Fair* (which work was refused by a magazine too) that I found, or perhaps sought, publishers bold enough to venture upon producing the *Hoggarty Diamond* in its present connected shape.

Those enterprising men are anxious that the moral of the tale, viz. that speculations are hazardous, and that honesty is the best policy, should be specially pointed out to the British public. But that moral is spoken a thousand times every year. Are not the newspapers full of advertisements about California? Have we not the Railway Share List as a constant monitor? It was after paying a call, with a very bad grace, that I thought to myself

ruefully,—why did I not remember the last page of the *Great Hoggarty Diamond* ?

Because prudence sometimes comes a little too late, and parsons do not practise what they preach, shall there be no more advice, and no more sermons ? Profit by it or not : at least the present discourse is not very long.

W. M. THACKERAY.

KENSINGTON, January 25, 1849.

THE
HISTORY OF SAMUEL TITMARSH
AND THE
GREAT HOGGARTY DIAMOND



CHAPTER I

GIVES AN ACCOUNT OF OUR VILLAGE, AND THE FIRST
GLIMPSE OF THE DIAMOND

WHEN I came up to town for my second year, my aunt Hoggarty made me a present of a diamond-pin ; that is to say, it was not a diamond-pin then, but a large, old-fashioned locket, of Dublin manufacture in the year 1795, which the late Mr. Hoggarty used to sport at the Lord Lieutenant's balls and elsewhere. He wore it, he said, at the battle of Vinegar Hill, when his club pigtail saved his head from being taken off,—but that is neither here nor there.

In the middle of the brooch was Hoggarty in the scarlet uniform of the corps of Fencibles to which he belonged ; around it were thirteen locks of hair, belonging to a baker's dozen of sisters, that the old gentleman had ; and, as all these little ringlets partook of the family hue of brilliant auburn, Hoggarty's portrait seemed to the fanciful view like a great, fat, red round of beef, surrounded by thirteen carrots. These were dished up on a plate of blue enamel, and it was from the GREAT HOGGARTY DIAMOND (as we called it in the family) that the collection of hairs in question seemed as it were to spring.

My aunt, I need not say, is rich ; and I thought I might be her heir as well as another. During my month's holiday, she was particularly pleased with me ; made me drink tea with her often (though there was a certain person in the

village with whom on those golden summer evenings I should have liked to have taken a stroll in the hayfields); promised every time I drank her bohea to do something handsome for me when I went back to town,—nay, three or four times had me to dinner at three, and to whist or cribbage afterwards. I did not care for the cards; for though we always played seven hours on a stretch, and I always lost, my losings were never more than nineteen-pence a night; but there was some infernal sour black-currant wine, that the old lady always produced at dinner, and with the tray at ten o'clock, and which I dared not refuse, though upon my word and honour it made me very unwell.

Well, I thought after all this obsequiousness on my part, and my aunt's repeated promises, that the old lady would at least make me a present of a score of guineas (of which she had a power in the drawer); and so convinced was I that some such present was intended for me, that a young lady by the name of Miss Mary Smith, with whom I had conversed on the subject, actually netted me a little green silk purse, which she gave me (behind Hicks's hayrick, as you turn to the right up Churchyard Lane)—which she gave me, I say, wrapped up in a bit of silver paper. There was something in the purse, too, if the truth must be known. First there was a thick curl of the glossiest, blackest hair you ever saw in your life, and next there was threepence; that is to say, the half of a silver sixpence hanging by a little necklace of blue riband. Ah, but I knew where the other half of the sixpence was, and envied that happy bit of silver!

The last day of my holiday I was obliged, of course, to devote to Mrs. Hoggarty. My aunt was excessively gracious; and by way of a treat brought out a couple of bottles of the black currant, of which she made me drink the greater part. At night when all the ladies assembled at her party had gone off with their pattens and their maids, Mrs. Hoggarty, who had made a signal to me to stay, first blew out three of the wax candles in the drawing-room, and taking the fourth in her hand, went and unlocked her escritoire.

I can tell you my heart beat, though I pretended to look quite unconcerned.

'Sam, my dear,' said she, as she was fumbling with



Behind the Hay-ricks

her keys, 'take another glass of Rosolio' (that was the name by which she baptized the cursed beverage), 'it will do you good.' I took it, and you might have seen my hand tremble as the bottle went click, click, against the glass. By the time I had swallowed it, the old lady had finished her operations at the bureau, and was coming towards me, the wax candle bobbing in one hand, and a large parcel in the other.

'Now's the time,' thought I.

'Samuel, my dear nephew,' said she, 'your first name you received from your sainted uncle, my blessed husband; and of all my nephews and nieces, you are the one whose conduct in life has most pleased me.'

When you consider that my aunt herself was one of seven married sisters, that all the Hoggarties were married in Ireland and mothers of numerous children, I must say that the compliment my aunt paid me was a very handsome one.

'Dear aunt,' says I, in a slow, agitated voice, 'I have often heard you say there were seventy-three of us in all, and believe me I do think your high opinion of me very complimentary indeed; I'm unworthy of it,—indeed I am.'

'As for those odious Irish people,' says my aunt, rather sharply, 'don't speak of them; I hate them, and every one of their mothers' (the fact is, there had been a lawsuit about Hoggarty's property); 'but of all my other kindred, you, Samuel, have been the most dutiful and affectionate to me. Your employers in London give the best accounts of your regularity and good conduct. Though you have had eighty pounds a year (a liberal salary), you have not spent a shilling more than your income, as other young men would; and you have devoted your month's holidays to your old aunt, who, I assure you, is grateful.'

'Oh, ma'am!' said I. It was all that I could utter.

'Samuel,' continued she, 'I promised you a present, and here it is. I first thought of giving you money; but you are a regular lad, and don't want it. You are above money, dear Samuel. I give you what I value most in life—the p—the po—the po-or-trait of my 'sainted Hoggarty' (tears) 'set in the locket which contains the valuable diamond that you have often heard me speak of. Wear it, dear Sam, for my sake; and think of that angel in heaven, and of your dear aunt Susy.'

She put the machine into my hands ; it was about the size of the lid of a shaving-box ; and I should as soon have thought of wearing it, as of wearing a cocked hat and pigtail. I was so disgusted and disappointed, that I really could not get out a single word.

When I recovered my presence of mind a little, I took the locket out of the bit of paper (the locket, indeed ! it was as big as a barn-door padlock), and slowly put it into my shirt. 'Thank you, aunt,' said I, with admirable raillery. 'I shall always value this present for the sake of you, who gave it me ; and it will recall to me my uncle, and my thirteen aunts in Ireland.'

'I don't want you to wear it in *that* way !' shrieked Mrs. Hoggarty, 'with the hair of those odious carrotty women. You must have their hair removed.'

'Then the locket will be spoiled, aunt.'

'Well, sir, never mind the locket, have it set afresh.'

'Or suppose,' said I, 'I put aside the setting altogether : it is a little too large for the present fashion ; and have the portrait of my uncle framed and placed over my chimney-piece, next to yours. It's a sweet miniature.'

'That miniature,' said Mrs. Hoggarty, solemnly, 'was the great Mulcahy's *chef-d'œuvre*' (pronounced *shy dewver*, a favourite word of my aunt's, being, with the words *bongtong* and *ally mode de Parry*, the extent of her French vocabulary). 'You know the dreadful story of that poor, poor artist. When he had finished that wonderful likeness for the late Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty, county Mayo, she wore it in her bosom at the Lord Lieutenant's ball, where she played a game of piquet with the Commander-in-chief. What could have made her put the hair of her vulgar daughters round Mick's portrait, I can't think ; but so it was, as you see it this day. "Madam," says the Commander-in-chief, "if that is not my friend Mick Hoggarty, I'm a Dutchman !" Those were his lordship's very words. Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty took off the brooch and showed it to him.

"Who is the artist ?" says my lord. "It's the most wonderful likeness I ever saw in my life !"

"Mulcahy," says she, "of Ormond's Quay."

"Begad, I patronize him !" says my lord ; but presently his face darkened, and he gave back the picture with a dissatisfied air. "There is one fault in that portrait,"

said his lordship, who was a rigid disciplinarian ; " and I wonder that my friend Mick, as a military man, should have overlooked it."

"What's that?" says Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty.

"Madam, he has been painted WITHOUT HIS SWORD-BELT!" and he took up the cards again in a passion, and finished the game without saying a single word.

The news was carried to Mr. Mulcahy the next day, and that unfortunate artist *went mad immediately!* He had set his whole reputation upon this miniature, and declared that it should be faultless. Such was the effect of the announcement upon his susceptible heart! When Mrs. Hoggarty died, your uncle took the portrait and always wore it himself. His sisters said it was for the sake of the diamond; whereas, ungrateful things! it was merely on account of their hair, and his love for the fine arts. As for the poor artist, my dear, some people said it was the profuse use of spirit that brought on *delirium tremens*, but I don't believe it. Take another glass of Rosolio.'

The telling of this story always put my aunt into great good humour, and she promised at the end of it to pay for the new setting of the diamond, desiring me to take it on my arrival in London to the great jeweller, Mr. Polonius, and send her the bill. 'The fact is,' said she, 'that the goold in which the thing is set is worth five guineas at the very least, and you can have the diamond reset for two. However, keep the remainder, dear Sam, and buy yourself what you please with it.'

With this the old lady bade me adieu. The clock was striking twelve as I walked down the village, for the story of Mulcahy always took an hour in the telling, and I went away not quite so down-hearted as when the present was first made to me. 'After all,' thought I, 'a diamond-pin is a handsome thing, and will give me a *distingué* air, though my clothes be never so shabby,' and shabby they were without any doubt. 'Well,' I said, 'three guineas, which I shall have over, will buy me a couple of pairs of what-d'ye-call-'ems,' of which, *entre nous*, I was in great want, having just then done growing, whereas my pantaloons were made a good eighteen months before.

Well, I walked down the village, my hands in my

breeches-pocket ; I had poor Mary's purse there, having removed the little things which she gave me the day before, and placed them—never mind where ; but look you, in those days I had a heart, and a warm one too : I had Mary's purse ready for my aunt's donation, which never came, and with my own little stock of money besides, that Mrs. Hoggarty's card-parties had lessened by a good five-and-twenty shillings, I calculated that, after paying my fare, I should get to town with a couple of seven-shilling pieces in my pocket.

I walked down the village at a deuce of a pace ; so quick that if the thing had been possible, I should have overtaken ten o'clock that had passed by me two hours ago, when I was listening to Mrs. H.'s long stories over her terrible Rosolio. The truth is, at ten I had an appointment under a certain person's window, who was to have been looking at the moon at that hour, with her pretty quilled night-cap on, and her blessed hair in papers.

There was the window shut, and not so much as a candle in it ; and though I hemmed, and hawed, and whistled over the garden-paling, and sang a song of which Somebody was very fond, and even threw a pebble at the window, which hit it exactly at the opening of the lattice,—I woke no one except a great brute of a house-dog, that yelled, and howled, and bounced so at me over the rails, that I thought every moment he would have had my nose between his teeth.

So I was obliged to go off as quickly as might be ; and the next morning mamma and my sisters made breakfast for me at four, and at five came the True-Blue light six-inside post-coach to London, and I got up on the roof without having seen Mary Smith.

As we passed the house, it *did* seem as if the window-curtain in her room was drawn aside just a little bit. Certainly the window was open, and it had been shut the night before ; but away went the coach ; and the village, cottage, and the churchyard, and Hicks's hay-ricks were soon out of sight.

' My hi, what a pin ! ' said a stable-boy who was smoking a cigar, to the guard, looking at me and putting his finger to his nose.

The fact is, that I had never undressed since my aunt's

party; and being uneasy in mind and having all my clothes to pack up, and thinking of something else, had quite forgotten Mrs. Hoggarty's brooch, which I had stuck into my shirt-frill the night before.

CHAPTER II

TELLS HOW THE DIAMOND IS BROUGHT UP TO LONDON, AND
PRODUCES WONDERFUL EFFECTS BOTH IN THE CITY
AND AT THE WEST END

THE circumstances recorded in this story took place some score of years ago, when, as the reader may remember, there was a great mania in the city of London for establishing companies of all sorts, by which many people made pretty fortunes.

I was at this period, as the truth must be known, thirteenth clerk of twenty-four young gents who did the immense business of the Independent West Diddlesex Fire and Life Insurance Company, at their splendid stone mansion in Cornhill. Mamma had sunk a sum of four hundred pounds in the purchase of an annuity at this office, which paid her no less than six-and-thirty pounds a year, when no other company in London would give her more than twenty-four. The chairman of the directors was the great Mr. Brough, of the house of Brough and Hoff, Crutched Friars, Turkey Merchants. It was a new house, but did a tremendous business in the fig and sponge way, and more in the Zante currant line than any other firm in the City.

Brough was a great man among the Dissenting connexion, and you saw his name for hundreds at the head of every charitable society patronized by those good people. He had nine clerks residing at his office in Crutched Friars; he would not take one without a certificate from the schoolmaster and clergyman of his native place, strongly vouching for his morals and doctrine; and the places were so run after, that he got a premium of four or five hundred pounds with each young gent, whom he made to slave for ten hours a day, and to whom in compensation he taught all the mysteries of the Turkish business. He was a great

man on 'Change, too; and our young chaps used to hear from the stockbrokers' clerks (we commonly dined together at the Cock and Woolpack, a respectable house, where you get a capital cut of meat, bread, vegetables, cheese, half a pint of porter, and a penny to the waiter, for a shilling)—the young stockbrokers used to tell us of immense bargains in Spanish, Greek, and Columbians, that Brough made. Hoff had nothing to do with them, but stopped at home minding exclusively the business of the house. He was a young chap, very quiet and steady, of the Quaker persuasion, and had been taken into partnership by Brough for a matter of thirty thousand pounds, and a very good bargain too. I was told in the strictest confidence that the house one year with another divided a good seven thousand pounds; of which Brough had half, Hoff two-sixths, and the other sixth went to old Tudlow, who had been Mr. Brough's clerk before the new partnership began. Tudlow always went about very shabby, and we thought him an old miser. One of our gents, Bob Swinney by name, used to say that Tudlow's share was all nonsense, and that Brough had it all; but Bob was always too knowing by half, used to wear a green cut-away coat, and had his free admission to Covent Garden theatre. He was always talking down at the shop, as we called it (it wasn't a shop, but as splendid an office as any in Cornhill)—he was always talking about Vestris and Miss Tree, and singing

‘The bramble, the bramble,
The jolly, jolly bramble!’

one of Charles Kemble's famous songs in *Maid Marian*, a play that was all the rage then, taken from a famous story-book by one Peacock, a clerk in the India House, and a precious good place he has too.

When Brough heard how Master Swinney abused him, and had his admission to the theatre, he came one day down to the office where we all were, four-and-twenty of us, and made one of the most beautiful speeches I ever heard in my life. He said that for slander he did not care, contumely was the lot of every public man who had austere principles of his own, and acted by them austere; but what he *did* care for was the character of every single gentleman forming a part of the Independent West Diddlesex Association. The welfare of thousands was in their

keeping ; millions of money were daily passing through their hands ; the City—the country looked upon them for order, honesty, and good example. And if he found amongst those whom he considered as his children—those whom he loved as his own flesh and blood—that that order was departed from, that that regularity was not maintained, that that good example was not kept up (Mr. B. always spoke in this emphatic way)—if he found his children departing from the wholesome rules of morality, religion, and decorum—if he found in high or low—in the head clerk at six hundred a year down to the porter who cleaned the steps—if he found the slightest taint of dissipation, he would cast the offender from him—yea, though he were his own son, he would cast him from him !

As he spoke this Mr. Brough burst into tears ; and we who didn't know what was coming, looked at each other as pale as parsnips ; all except Swinney, who was twelfth clerk, and made believe to whistle. When Mr. B. had wiped his eyes and recovered himself, he turned round ; and, oh, how my heart thumped as he looked me full in the face ! How it was relieved, though, when he shouted out in a thundering voice,—

‘ Mr. ROBERT SWINNEY ! ’

‘ Sir to you,’ says Swinney, as cool as possible, and some of the chaps began to titter.

‘ Mr. SWINNEY ! ’ roared Brough, in a voice still bigger than before, ‘ when you came into this office—this family, sir, for such it is, as I am proud to say—you found three-and-twenty as pious and well-regulated young men as ever laboured together—as ever had confided to them the wealth of this mighty capital and famous empire. You found, sir, sobriety, regularity, and decorum ; no profane songs were uttered in this place sacred to—to business ; no slanders were whispered against the heads of the establishment—but over them I pass ; I can afford, sir, to pass them by—no worldly conversation or foul jesting disturbed the attention of these gentlemen, or desecrated the peaceful scene of their labours. You found Christians and gentlemen, sir ! ’

‘ I paid for my place like the rest,’ said Swinney. ‘ Didn't my governor take sha——’

‘ Silence, sir ! Your worthy father did take shares in this establishment, which will yield him one day an

immense profit. He *did* take shares, sir, or you never would have been here. I glory in saying that every one of my young friends around me has a father, a brother, a dear relative or friend, who is connected in a similar way with our glorious enterprise ; and that not one of them is there but has an interest in procuring, at a liberal commission, other persons to join the ranks of our association. *But*, sir, I am its chief. You will find, sir, your appointment signed by me ; and in like manner I, John Brough, annul it. Go from us, sir !—leave us—quit a family that can no longer receive you in its bosom ! Mr. Swinney, I have wept—I have prayed, sir, before I came to this determination ; I have taken counsel, sir, and am resolved. *Depart from out of us !*

‘Not without three months’ salary, though, Mr. B. : that cock won’t fight !’

‘They shall be paid to your father, sir.’

‘My father be hanged ! I’ll tell you what, Brough, I’m of age ; and if you don’t pay me my salary, I’ll arrest you,—by Jingo, I will ! I’ll have you in quod, or my name’s not Bob Swinney !’

‘Make out a cheque, Mr. Roundhand, for the three months’ salary of this perverted young man.’

‘Twenty-one pun five, Roundhand, and nothing for the stamp !’ cried out that audacious Swinney. ‘There it is, sir, *re-ceipted*. You needn’t cross it to my banker’s. And if any of you gents like a glass of punch this evening at eight o’clock, Bob Swinney’s your man, and nothing to pay. If Mr. Brough *would* do me the honour to come in and take a whack ? Come, don’t say no, if you’d rather not !’

We couldn’t stand this impudence, and all burst out laughing like mad.

‘Leave the room !’ yelled Mr. Brough, whose face had turned quite blue ; and so Bob took his white hat off the peg, and strolled away with his ‘tile,’ as he called it, very much on one side. When he was gone, Mr. Brough gave us another lecture, by which we all determined to profit ; and going up to Roundhand’s desk put his arm round his neck, and looked over the ledger.

‘What money has been paid in to-day, Roundhand ?’ he said, in a very kind way.

‘The widow, sir, came with her money : nine hundred



A Black-Sheep

and four, ten and six—say 90*4*l. 10*s.* 6*d.* Captain Sparr, sir, paid his shares up; grumbles, though, and says he's no more: fifty shares, two instalments—three fifties, sir.'

'He's always grumbling!'

'He says he has not a shilling to bless himself with until our dividend day.'

'Any more?'

Mr. Roundhand went through the book, and made it up nineteen hundred pounds in all. We were doing a famous business now; though when I came into the office we used to sit and laugh, and joke, and read the newspapers all day, bustling into our seats whenever a stray customer came. Brough never cared about our laughing and singing *then*, and was hand and glove with Bob Swinney; but that was in early times, before we were well in harness.

'Nineteen hundred pounds, and a thousand pounds in shares. Bravo, Roundhand—bravo, gentlemen! Remember every share you bring in brings you five per cent. down on the nail! Look to your friends—stick to your desks—be regular—I hope none of you forget church. Who takes Mr. Swinney's place?'

'Mr. Samuel Titmarsh, sir.'

'Mr. Titmarsh, I congratulate you. Give me your hand, sir; you are now twelfth clerk of this Association, and your salary is consequently increased five pounds a year. How is your worthy mother, sir—your dear and excellent parent? In good health, I trust? And long—long, I fervently pray, may this office continue to pay her annuity! Remember, if she has more money to lay out, there is higher interest than the last for her, for she is a year older, and five per cent. for you, my boy! Why not you as well as another? Young men will be young men, and a ten-pound note does no harm. Does it, Mr. Abednego?'

'Oh, no!' says Abednego, who was third clerk, and who was the chap that informed against Swinney; and he began to laugh, as indeed we all did whenever Mr. Brough made anything like a joke; not that they *were* jokes; only we used to know it by his face.

'Oh, by the by, Roundhand,' says he, 'a word with you on business. Mrs. Brough wants to know why the deuce you never come down to Fulham.'

'Law, that's very polite!' said Mr. Roundhand, quite pleased.

'Name your day, my boy! Say Saturday, and bring your nightcap with you.'

'You're very polite, I'm sure. I should be delighted beyond anything, but——'

'But—no buts, my boy! Hark ye! the Chancellor of the Exchequer does me the honour to dine with us, and I want you to see him; for the truth is I have bragged about you to his lordship as the best actuary in the three kingdoms.'

Roundhand could not refuse such an invitation as *that*, though he had told us how Mrs. R. and he were going to pass Saturday and Sunday at Putney; and we who knew what a life the poor fellow led, were sure that the head clerk would be prettily scolded by his lady when she heard what was going on. She disliked Mrs. Brough very much, that was the fact; because Mrs. B. kept a carriage, and said she didn't know where Pentonville was, and couldn't call on Mrs. Roundhand. Though to be sure, her coachman might have found out the way.

'And, oh, Roundhand!' continued our governor, 'draw a cheque for seven hundred, will you? Come, don't stare, man; I'm not going to run away! That's right,—seven hundred—and ninety say, while you're about it! Our board meets on Saturday, and never fear I'll account for it to them before I drive you down. We shall take up the Chancellor at Whitehall.'

So saying, Mr. Brough folded up the cheque, and shaking hands with Mr. Roundhand very cordially, got into his carriage-and-four (he always drove four horses even in the City, where it's so difficult), which was waiting at the office-door for him.

Bob Swinney used to say that he charged two of the horses to the Company; but there was never believing half of what that Bob said, he used to laugh and joke so. I don't know how it was, but I and a gent by the name of Hoskins (eleventh clerk), who lived together with me in Salisbury Square, Fleet Street, where we occupied a very genteel two-pair, found our flute duet rather tiresome that evening, and as it was a very fine night, strolled out for a walk West End way. When we arrived opposite Covent Garden Theatre we found ourselves close to the Globe Tavern, and recollected Bob Swinney's hospitable invitation. We never fancied that he had meant the invitation

in earnest, but thought we might as well look in ; at any rate there could be no harm in doing so.

There, to be sure, in the back drawing-room, where he said he would be, we found Bob at the head of a table, and in the midst of a great smoke of cigars, and eighteen of our gents rattling and banging away at the table with the bottoms of their glasses.

What a shout they made as we came in ! ' Hurray ! ' says Bob, ' here's two more ! Two more chairs, Mary, two more tumblers, two more hot waters, and two more goes of gin ! Who would have thought of seeing Tit, in the name of goodness ? '

' Why,' said I, ' we only came in by the merest chance.'

At this word there was another tremendous roar : and it is a positive fact, that every man of the eighteen had said he came by chance ! However, chance gave us a very jovial night ; and that hospitable Bob Swinney paid every shilling of the score.

' Gentlemen ! ' says he, as he paid the bill, ' I'll give you the health of John Brough, Esquire, and thanks to him for the present of 21*l.* 5*s.* which he made me this morning. What do I say, 21*l.* 5*s.* ? That and a month's salary that I should have had to pay—*forfeit*—down on the nail by Jingo ! for leaving the shop, as I intended to do, to-morrow morning. I've got a place—a tip-top place, I tell you. Five guineas a week, six journeys a year, my own horse and gig, and to travel in the West of England in oil and spermaceti. Here's confusion to gas, and the health of Messrs. Gann and Co. of Thames Street, in the City of London ! '

I have been thus particular in my account of the West Diddlesex Assurance Office, and of Mr. Brough, the managing director (though the real names are neither given to the office nor to the chairman, as you may be sure), because the fate of me and my diamond-pin was mysteriously bound up with both, as I am about to show.

You must know that I was rather respected among our gents at the West Diddlesex, because I came of a better family than most of them ; had received a classical education ; and especially because I had a rich aunt, Mrs. Hoggarty, about whom, as must be confessed, I used to boast a good deal. There is no harm in being respected in this world as I have found out : and if you don't brag

a little for yourself, depend on it there is no person of your acquaintance who will tell the world of your merits, and take the trouble off your hands.

So that when I came back to the office after my visit at home, and took my seat at the old day-book opposite the dingy window that looks into Birchin Lane, I pretty soon let the fellows know that Mrs. Hoggarty, though she had not given me a large sum of money, as I expected—indeed, I had promised a dozen of them a treat down the river, should the promised riches have come to me—I let them know, I say, that though my aunt had not given me any money, she had given me a splendid diamond, worth at least thirty guineas, and that some day I would sport it at the shop.

‘Oh, let’s see it!’ says Abednego, whose father was a mock-jewel and gold-lace merchant in Hanway Yard; and I promised that he should have a sight of it as soon as it was set. As my pocket money was run out too (by coach hire to and from home, five shillings to our maid at home, ten to my aunt’s maid and man, five-and-twenty shillings lost at whist, as I said, and fifteen-and-six paid for a silver scissors for the dear little fingers of Somebody), Roundhand, who was very good-natured, asked me to dine, and advanced me 7*l.* 1*s.* 8*d.*, a month’s salary. It was at Roundhand’s house, Myddelton Square, Pentonville, over a fillet of veal and bacon, and a glass of port, that I learned and saw how his wife ill-treated him, as I have told before. Poor fellow!—we under-clerks all thought it was a fine thing to sit at a desk by oneself, and have 50*l.* per month, as Roundhand had; but I’ve a notion that Hoskins and I, blowing duets on the flute together in our second floor in Salisbury Square, were a great deal more at ease than our head—and more *in harmony*, too, though we made sad work of the music, certainly.

One day Gus Hoskins and I asked leave from Roundhand to be off at three o’clock, as we had *particular business* at the West-End. He knew it was about the great Hoggarty diamond, and gave us permission; so off we set. When we reached St. Martin’s Lane, Gus got a cigar, to give himself as it were a *distingué* air, and puffed at it all the way up the Lane, and through the alleys into Coventry Street, where Mr. Polonius’s shop is, as everybody knows.

The door was open, and a number of carriages full of

ladies were drawing up and setting down. Gus kept his hands in his pockets—trousers were worn very full then, with large tucks, and pigeon-holes for your boots, or Bluchers, to come through (the fashionables wore boots, but we chaps in the City, on 80*l.* a year, contented ourselves with Bluchers); and as Gus stretched out his pantaloons as wide as he could from his hips, and kept blowing away at his cheroot, and clamping with the iron heels of his boots, and had very large whiskers for so young a man, he really looked quite the genteel thing, and was taken by everybody to be a person of consideration.

He would not come into the shop though, but stood staring at the gold pots and kettles in the window outside. I went in; and after a little hemming and hawing, for I had never been at such a fashionable place before, asked one of the gentlemen to let me speak to Mr. Polonius.

'What can I do for you, sir?' says Mr. Polonius, who was standing close by, as it happened, serving three ladies,—a very old one, and two young ones, who were examining pearl necklaces very attentively.

'Sir,' said I, producing my jewel out of my coat-pocket, 'this jewel has, I believe, been in your house before: it belonged to my aunt, Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty.' The old lady standing near looked round as I spoke.

'I sold her a gold neck-chain and repeating-watch in the year 1795,' said Mr. Polonius, who made it a point to recollect everything; 'and a silver punch-ladle to the captain. How is the major—colonel—general—eh, sir?'

'The general,' said I, 'I am sorry to say,' though I was quite proud that this man of fashion should address me so, 'Mr. Hoggarty is—no more. My aunt has made me a present, however, of this—this trinket, which as you see contains her husband's portrait, that I will thank you, sir, to preserve for me very carefully; and she wishes that you would set this diamond neatly.'

'Neatly and handsomely, of course, sir.'

'Neatly, in the present fashion; and send down the account to her. There is a great deal of gold about the trinket, for which, of course, you will make an allowance.'

'To the last fraction of a sixpence,' says Mr. Polonius, bowing, and looking at the jewel. 'It's a wonderful piece of goods, certainly,' said he; 'though the diamond's a neat little bit, certainly. Do, my lady, look at it. The thing

is of Irish manufacture, bears the stamp of '95, and will recall, perhaps, the times of your ladyship's earliest youth.'

'Get ye out, Mr. Polonius!' said the old lady, a little wizened-faced old lady, with her face puckered up in a million of wrinkles: 'How *dar* you, sir, to talk such nonsense to an old woman like me? Wasn't I fifty years old in '95, and a grandmother in '96?' She put out a pair of withered, trembling hands, took up the locket, examined it for a minute, and then burst out laughing, 'As I live, it's the great Hoggarty diamond!'

Good Heavens! what was this talisman that had come into my possession?

'Look, girls,' continued the old lady, 'this is the great jew'l of all Ireland. This red-faced man in the middle is poor Mick Hoggarty, a cousin of mine, who was in love with me in the year '84, when I had just lost your poor dear grandpapa. These thirteen sthreamers of red hair represent his thirteen celebrated sisters,—Biddy, Minny, Thedy, Widdy (short for Williamina), Freddy, Izzy, Tizzy, Mysie, Grizzly, Polly, Dolly, Nell, and Bell—all married, all ugly, and all carr'ty hair. And of which are you the son, young man?—though, to do you justice, you're not like the family.'

Two pretty young ladies turned two pretty pairs of black eyes at me, and waited for an answer: which they would have had, only the old lady began rattling on a hundred stories about the thirteen ladies above named, and all their lovers, all their disappointments, and all the duels of Mick Hoggarty. She was a chronicle of fifty-years-old scandal. At last she was interrupted by a violent fit of coughing; at the conclusion of which Mr. Polonius very respectfully asked me where he should send the pin, and whether I would like the hair kept.

'No,' says I, 'never mind the hair.'

'And the pin, sir?'

I had felt ashamed about telling my address: 'But, hang it!' thought I, 'why *should* I?—

'A king can make a belted knight,

A marquess, duke, and a' that;

An honest man's abune his might—

• Gude faith, he canna fa' that.

'Why need I care about telling these ladies where I live?

'Sir,' says I, 'have the goodness to send the parcel,



A Coronet. by Jingo

when done, to Mr. Titmarsh, No. 3, Bell Lane, Salisbury Square, near St. Bride's Church, Fleet Street. Ring, if you please, the two-pair bell.'

'What, sir?' said Mr. Polonius.

'Hwat!' shrieked the old lady. 'Mr. Hwat? *Mais, ma chère, c'est impayable.* Come along—here's the carr'age! Give me your arm, Mr. Hwat, and get inside, and tell me all about your thirteen aunts.'

She seized on my elbow and hobbled through the shop as fast as possible; the young ladies following her, laughing.

'Now jump in, do you hear?' said she, poking her sharp nose out of the window.

'I can't, ma'am,' says I; 'I have a friend.'

'Pooh, pooh! send um to the juice, and jump in;' and before almost I could say a word, a great powdered fellow in yellow-plush breeches pushed me up the steps and banged the door to.

I looked just for one minute as the barouche drove away at Hoskins, and never shall forget his figure. There stood Gus, his mouth wide open, his eyes staring, a smoking cheroot in his hand, wondering with all his might at the strange thing that had just happened to me.

'Who is that Titmarsh?' says Gus: 'there's a coronet on the carriage, by jingo!'

CHAPTER III

HOW THE POSSESSOR OF THE DIAMOND IS WHISKED INTO A MAGNIFICENT CHARIOT, AND HAS YET FURTHER GOOD LUCK

I SAT on the back seat of the carriage, near a very nice young lady, about my dear Mary's age—that is to say, seventeen and three-quarters; and opposite us sat the old countess and her other granddaughter—handsome too, but ten years older. I recollect I had on that day my blue coat and brass buttons, nankeen trousers, a white sprig waistcoat, and one of Dando's silk hats, that had just come in in the year '22, and looked a great deal more glossy than the best beaver.

'And who was that hidjus manster,' that was the way her ladyship pronounced,—'that ojus vulgar wretch, with

the iron heels to his boots, and the big mouth, and the imitation goold neck-chain, who *steered* at us so as we got into the carr'age ?'

How she should have known that Gus's chain was mosaic I can't tell ; but so it was, and we had bought it for five-and-twenty and sixpence only the week before at M'Phail's, in St. Paul's Churchyard. But I did not like to hear my friend abused, and so spoke out for him,—

'Ma'am,' says I, 'that young gentleman's name is Augustus Hoskins. We live together ; and a better or more kind-hearted fellow does not exist.'

'You are quite right to stand up for your friends, sir,' said the second lady, whose name, it appears, was Lady Jane, but whom the grandmamma called Lady Jene.

'Well, upon me conscience, so he is now, Lady Jene ; and I like sper't in a young man. So his name is Hoskins, is it ? I know, my dears, all the Hoskinses in England. There are the Lincolnshire Hoskinses, the Shropshire Hoskinses : they say the*admiral's daughter, Bell, was in love with a black footman, or boatswain, or some such thing ; but the world's so censorious. There's old Doctor Hoskins of Bath, who attended poor dear Drum in the quinsy. And poor dear old Fred Hoskins, the gouty general : I remember him as thin as a lath in the year '84, and as active as a harlequin, and in love with me—oh, how he was in love with me !'

'You seem to have had a host of admirers in those days, grandmamma ?' said Lady Jane.

'Hundreds, my dear,—hundreds of thousands. I was the toast of Bath, and a great beauty, too ; would you ever have thought it now, upon your conscience and without flattery, Mr.-a-What-d'ye-call-'em ?'

'Indeed, ma'am, I never should,' I answered, for the old lady was as ugly as possible ; and at my saying this the two young ladies began screaming with laughter, and I saw the two great-whiskered footmen grinning over the back of the carriage.

'Upon my word, you're mighty candid, Mr. What's-your-name—mighty candid, indeed ; but I like candour in young people. But a beauty I was. Just ask your friend's uncle the general. He's one of the Lincolnshire Hoskinses—I knew he was by the strong family likeness. Is he the eldest son ? It's a pretty property, though sadly

encumbered ; for old Sir George was the divvle of a man—a friend of Hanbury Williams, and Lyttleton, and those horrid, monstrous, ojoues people ! How much will he have now, mister, when the admiral dies ? ’

‘ Why, ma’am, I can’t say ; but the admiral is not my friend’s father. ’

‘ Not his father ?—but he *is*, I tell you, and I’m never wrong. Who is his father, then ? ’

‘ Ma’am, Gus’s father’s a leather-seller in Skinner Street, Snow Hill,—a very respectable house, ma’am. But Gus is only third son, and so can’t expect a great share in the property. ’

The two young ladies smiled at this—the old lady said, ‘ Hwat ? ’—[but the two footmen began to roar out in a regular fit of laughter.

‘ Those gents on the footboard seem to think it a very good joke, ma’am,’ says I, ‘ that my friend Augustus Hoskins should be a leather-seller’s son. I hope there’s no offence. ’

‘ Those—gents—are very impertinent,’ said Lady Jane ; ‘ and ’¹ I like you, sir, for not being ashamed of your friends, whatever their rank of life may be. Shall we have the pleasure of setting you down anywhere, Mr. Titmarsh ? ’

‘ Noways particular, my lady,’ says I. ‘ We have a holiday at our office to-day—at least, Roundhand gave me and Gus leave ; and I shall be very happy, indeed, to take a drive in the Park, if it’s no offence. ’

‘ I’m sure it will give us—infinite pleasure,’ said Lady Jane, though rather in a grave way.

‘ Oh, that it will ! ’ says Lady Fanny, clapping her hands : ‘ won’t it, grandmamma ? And after we have been in the Park, we can walk in Kensington Gardens, if Mr. Titmarsh will be good enough to accompany us. ’

‘ Indeed, Fanny, we will do no such thing,’ says Lady Jane.

‘ Indeed, but we will though ! ’ shrieked out Lady Drum. ‘ An’t I dying to know everything about his uncle and thirteen aunts ? and you’re all chattering so, you young women, that not a blessed syllable will you allow me or my young friend here to speak. ’

Lady Jane gave a shrug with her shoulders, and did not say a single word more. Lady Fanny, who was as

¹ Omitted in later editions.

gay as a young kitten (if I may be allowed so to speak of the aristocracy), laughed, and blushed, and giggled, and seemed quite to enjoy her sister's ill humour. And the countess began at once, and entered into the history of the thirteen Misses Hoggarty, which was not near finished when we entered the Park.

When there, you can't think what hundreds of gents on horseback came to the carriage and talked to the ladies. They had their joke for Lady Drum, who seemed to be a character in her way; their bow for Lady Jane; and, the young ones especially, their compliment for Lady Fanny.

Though she bowed and blushed, as a young lady should, Lady Fanny seemed to be thinking of something else, for she kept her head out of the carriage, looking eagerly among the horsemen, as if she expected to see somebody. Aha! my Lady Fanny, I knew what it meant when a young pretty lady like you was absent, and on the look-out, and only half answered the questions put to her. Let alone Sam Titmarsh—he knows what *Somebody* means as well as another, I warrant. As I saw these manœuvres going on, I could not help just giving a wink to Lady Jane, as much as to say I knew what was what. 'I guess the young lady is looking for Somebody,' says I. It was then *her* turn to look queer, I assure you, and she blushed as red as scarlet; but, after a minute, the good-natured little thing looked at her sister, and both the young ladies put their handkerchiefs up to their faces, and began laughing—laughing as if I had said the funniest thing in the world.

'*Il est charmant, votre monsieur*,' said Lady Jane to her grandmamma. And on which I bowed, and said, '*Madame, vous me faites beaucoup d'honneur*'; for I knew the French language, and was pleased to find that these good ladies had taken a liking to me. 'I'm a poor humble lad, ma'am, not used to London society, and do really feel it quite kind of you to take me by the hand so, and give me a drive in your fine carriage.'

At this minute a gentleman on a black horse, with a pale face, and a tuft to his chin, came riding up to the carriage; and I knew by a little start that Lady Fanny gave, and by her instantly looking round the other way, that *Somebody* was come at last.

'Lady Drum,' said he, 'your most devoted servant! I have just been riding with a gentleman who almost shot

himself for love of the beautiful Countess of Drum in the year—never mind the year.’

‘Was it Killblazes?’ said the lady: ‘he’s a dear old man, and I’m quite ready to go off with him this minute. Or was it that delight of an old bishop? He’s got a lock of my hair now—I gave it him when he was papa’s chaplain; and let me tell you it would be a hard matter to find another now in the same place.’

‘Law, my lady!’ says I, ‘you don’t say so?’

‘But indeed, I do, my good sir,’ says she; ‘for, between ourselves, my head’s as bare as a cannon-ball—ask Fanny if it isn’t. Such a fright as the poor thing got when she was a babby, and came upon me suddenly in my dressing-room without my wig!’

‘I hope Lady Fanny has recovered from the shock,’ said ‘Somebody,’ looking first at her, and then at me as if he had a mind to swallow me. And, would you believe it? all that Lady Fanny could say was, ‘Pretty well, I thank you, my lord’; and she said this with as much fluttering and blushing as we used to say our Virgil at school—when we hadn’t learned it.

My lord still kept on looking very fiercely at me, and muttered something about having hoped to find a seat in Lady Drum’s carriage, as he was tired of riding; on which Lady Fanny muttered something, too, about ‘a friend of grandmamma’s.’

‘You should say a friend of yours, Fanny,’ says Lady Jane: ‘I am sure we should never have come to the Park if Fanny had not insisted upon bringing Mr. Titmarsh hither. Let me introduce the Earl of Tiptoff to Mr. Titmarsh.’ But, instead of taking off his hat, as I did mine, his lordship growled out that he hoped for another opportunity, and galloped off again on his black horse. Why the deuce *I* should have offended him I never could understand.

But it seemed as if I was destined to offend all the men that day; for who should presently come up but the Right Hon. Edmund Preston, one of his Majesty’s secretaries of state (as I knew very well by the almanac in our office), and the husband of Lady Jane.

The Right Hon. Edmund was riding a grey cob, and was a fat, pale-faced man, who looked as if he never went into the open air. ‘Who the devil’s that?’ said he to his wife, looking surlily both at me and her.

'Oh, it's a friend of grandmamma's and Jane's,' said Lady Fanny at once, looking, like a sly rogue as she was, quite archly at her sister, who, in her turn, appeared quite frightened, and looked imploringly at her sister, and never dared to breathe a syllable. 'Yes, indeed,' continued Lady Fanny, 'Mr. Titmarsh is a cousin of grandmamma's, by the mother's side, by the Hoggarty side. Didn't you know the Hoggarties when you were in Ireland, Edmund, with Lord Bagwig? Let me introduce you to grandmamma's cousin, Mr. Titmarsh; Mr. Titmarsh, my brother, Mr. Edmund Preston.'

There was Lady Jane all the time treading upon her sister's foot as hard as possible, and the little wicked thing would take no notice, and I, who had never heard of the cousinship, feeling as confounded as could be. But I did not know the Countess of Drum near so well as that sly minx her granddaughter did; for the old lady, who had just before called poor Gus Hoskins her cousin, had, it appeared, the mania of fancying all the world related to her, and said,—

'Yes, we're cousins, and not very far removed. Mick Hoggarty's grandmother was Millicent Brady, and she and my Aunt Towzer were related, as all the world knows; for Decimus Brady of Ballybrady married an own cousin of Aunt Towzer's mother, Bell Swift—that was no relation of the Dean's, my love, who came but of a so-so family—and isn't *that* clear?'

'Oh, perfectly, grandmamma,' said Lady Jane, laughing, while the right honourable gent still rode by us, looking sour and surly.

'And sure you knew the Hoggarties, Edmund?—the thirteen red-haired girls—the nine graces, and four over, as poor Clanboy used to call them. Poor Clan!—a cousin of yours and mine, Mr. Titmarsh, and sadly in love with me he was too. Not remember them *all* now, Edmund?—not remember?—not remember Biddy and Minny, and Thedy and Widdy, and Mysie and Grizzy, and Polly and Dolly, and the rest?'

'D—the Miss Hoggarties, ma'am,' said the right honourable gent; and he said it with such energy, that his grey horse gave a sudden lash-out that wellnigh sent him over his head. Lady Jane screamed; Lady Fanny laughed; old Lady Drum looked as if she did not care twopence, and

said, 'Serve you right for swearing, you ojou's man, you !'

'Hadn't you better come into the carriage, Edmund—Mr. Preston ?' cried out the lady, anxiously.

'Oh, I'm sure I'll slip out, ma'am,' says I.

'Pooh, pooh, don't stir,' said Lady Drum, 'it's my carriage ; and if Mr. Preston chooses to swear at a lady of my years in that ojou's vulgar way—in that ojou's vulgar way, I repeat—I don't see why my friends should be inconvenienced for him. Let him sit on the dicky if he likes, or come in and ride bodkin.' It was quite clear that my Lady Drum hated her grandson-in-law heartily ; and I've remarked somehow in families that this kind of hatred is by no means uncommon.

Mr. Preston, one of his Majesty's secretaries of state, was, to tell the truth, in a great fright upon his horse, and was glad to get away from the kicking, plunging brute. His pale face looked still paler than before, and his hands and legs trembled as he dismounted from the cob, and gave the reins to his servant. I disliked the looks of the chap—of the master, I mean—at the first moment he came up, when he spoke rudely to that nice gentle wife of his ; and I thought he was a cowardly fellow, as the adventure of the cob showed him to be. Heaven bless you ! a baby could have ridden it ; and here was the man with his soul in his mouth at the very first kick.

'Oh, quick ! *do* come in, Edmund,' said Lady Fanny, laughing ; and the carriage steps being let down, and giving me a great scowl as he came in, he was going to place himself in Lady Fanny's corner (I warrant you I wouldn't budge from mine), when the little rogue cried out, 'Oh, no ! by no means, Mr. Preston. Shut the door, Thomas. And oh ! what fun it will be to show all the world a secretary of state riding bodkin !'

And pretty glum the secretary of state looked, I assure you !

'Take my place, Edmund, and don't mind Fanny's folly,' said Lady Jane, timidly.

'Oh, no !—pray, madam, don't stir ! I'm comfortable, very comfortable ; and so I hope is this Mr.—this gentleman.'

'Perfectly, I assure you,' says I. 'I was going to offer to ride your horse home for you, as you seemed to be rather

frightened at it ; but the fact was, I was so comfortable here that really I *couldn't* move.'

Such a grin as old Lady Drum gave when I said that !—how her little eyes twinkled, and her little sly mouth puckered up ! I couldn't help speaking, for, look you, my blood was up.

'We shall always be happy of your company, cousin Titmarsh,' says she ; and handed me a gold snuff-box, out of which I took a pinch, and sneezed with the air of a lord.

'As you have invited this gentleman into your carriage, Lady Jane Preston, hadn't you better invite him home to dinner ?' says Mr. Preston, quite blue with rage.

'I invited him into *my* carriage,' says the old lady ; 'and as we are going to dine at your house, and you press it, I'm sure I shall be very happy to see him there.'

'I'm very sorry I'm engaged,' said I.

'Oh, indeed, what a pity !' says right honourable Ned, still glowering at his wife. 'What a pity that this gentleman—I forget his name—that your friend, Lady Jane, is engaged ! I am sure you would have had such gratification in meeting your relation in Whitehall.'

Lady Drum was over fond of finding out relations, to be sure, but this speech of right honourable Ned's was rather too much. 'Now, Sam,' says I, 'be a man and show your spirit !' So I spoke up at once, and said, 'Why, ladies, as the right honourable gent is so *very* pressing, I'll give up my engagement, and shall have sincere pleasure in cutting mutton with him. What's your hour, sir ?'

He didn't condescend to answer, and for me I did not care, for, you see, I did not intend to dine with the man, but only to give him a lesson of manners. For though I am but a poor fellow, and hear people cry out how vulgar it is to eat peas with a knife, or ask three times for cheese, and such-like points of ceremony, there's something, I think, much more vulgar than all this, and that is, insolence to one's inferiors. I hate the chap that uses it, as I scorn him of humble rank that affects to be of the fashion ; and so I determined to let Mr. Preston know a piece of my mind.

When the carriage drove up to his house, I handed out the ladies as politely as possible, and walked into the hall, and then taking hold of Mr. Preston's button at the door, I said, before the ladies and the two big servants—upon my word I did—'Sir,' says I, 'this kind old lady asked me into

her carriage, and I rode in it to please her, not myself. When you came up and asked who the devil I was, I thought you might have put the question in a more polite manner, but it wasn't my business to speak. When, by way of a joke, you invited me to dinner, I thought I would answer in a joke too, and here I am. But don't be frightened; I'm not a-going to dine with you: only if you play the same joke upon other parties—on some of the chaps in our office, for example—I recommend you to have a care, or they will *take you at your word*.'

'Is that all, sir?' says Mr. Preston, still in a rage: 'if you have done, will you leave this house, or shall my servants turn you out? Turn out this fellow! do you hear me?' and he broke away from me, and flung into his study in a rage.

'He's an ojus, horrid monsther of a man, that husband of yours!' said Lady Drum, seizing hold of her elder granddaughter's arm, 'and I hate him; and so come away, for the dinner'll be getting cold:' and she was for hurrying away Lady Jane without more ado. But that kind lady, coming forward, looking very pale and trembling, said, 'Mr. Titmarsh, I do hope you'll not be angry—that is, that you'll forget what has happened, for, believe me, it has given me very great——'

Very great what, I never could say, for here the poor thing's eyes filled with tears; and Lady Drum, crying out, 'Tut, tut! none of this nonsense,' pulled her away by the sleeve, and went upstairs. But little Lady Fanny walked boldly up to me, and held me out her little hand, and gave mine such a squeeze, and said, 'Good-bye, my dear Mr. Titmarsh,' so very kindly, that I'm blest if I did not blush up to the ears, and all the blood in my body began to tingle.

So, when she was gone, I clapped my hat on my head, and walked out of the hall-door, feeling as proud as a peacock and as brave as a lion; and all I wished for was that one of those saucy, grinning footmen should say or do something to me that was the least uncivil, so that I might have the pleasure of knocking him down, with my best compliments to his master. But neither of them did me any such favour; and I went away, and dined at home off boiled mutton and turnips with Gus Hoskins quite peacefully.

I did not think it was proper to tell Gus (who, between

ourselves, is rather curious, and inclined to tittle-tattle) all the particulars of the family quarrel of which I had been the cause and witness, and so just said that the old lady—— ('They were the Drum arms,' says Gus; 'for I went and looked them out that minute in the *Peerage* ;') that the old lady turned out to be a cousin of mine, and that she had taken me to drive in the Park. Next day, we went to the office as usual, when you may be sure that Hoskins told everything of what had happened, and a great deal more; and somehow, though I did not pretend to care sixpence about the matter, I must confess that I *was* rather pleased that the gents in our office should hear of a part of my adventure.

But fancy my surprise, on coming home in the evening, to find Mrs. Stokes, the landlady; Miss Selina Stokes, her daughter; and Master Bob Stokes, her son (an idle young vagabond, that was always playing marbles on St. Bride's steps and in Salisbury Square),—when I found them all bustling and tumbling up the steps before me to our rooms, on the second floor, and there, on the table, between our two flutes, on one side, my album, Gus's *Don Juan* and *Peerage* on the other, I saw as follows:—

1. A basket of great red peaches, looking like the cheeks of my dear Mary Smith.

2. A ditto of large, fat, luscious, heavy-looking grapes.

3. An enormous piece of raw mutton, as I thought it was; but Mrs. Stokes said it was the primest haunch of venison that ever she saw.

And three cards, viz.,

DOWAGER COUNTESS OF DRUM.

LADY FANNY RAKES.

MR. PRESTON.

LADY JANE PRESTON.

EARL OF TIPTOFF.

'Such a carriage!' says Mrs. Stokes (for that was the way the poor thing spoke) 'such a carriage—all over coronites! such liveries—two great footmen, with red whiskers and yellow plush small-clothes; and inside, a very old lady in a white poke bonnet, and a young one with a great Leg-horn hat and blue ribands, and a great, tall, pale gentleman, with a tuft on his chin.

“ Pray, madam, does Mr. Titmarsh live here ? ” says the young lady, with her clear voice.

“ Yes, my lady,” says I ; “ but he’s at the office—the West Diddlesex Fire and Life Office, Cornhill.”

“ Charles, get out the things,” says the gentleman, quite solemn.

“ Yes, my lord,” says Charles ; and brings me out the haunch in a newspaper, and on the chany dish as you see it, and the two baskets of fruit besides.

“ Have the kindness, madam,” said my lord, “ to take these things to Mr. Titmarsh’s rooms, with our, with Lady Jane Preston’s compliments, and request his acceptance of them ; ” and then he pulled out the cards on your table, and this letter, sealed with his lordship’s own crown.’

And herewith Mrs. Stokes gave me a letter, which my wife keeps to this day, by the way, and which runs thus :—

‘ The Earl of Tiptoff has been commissioned by Lady Jane Preston to express her sincere regret and disappointment that she was not able yesterday to enjoy the pleasure of Mr. Titmarsh’s company. Lady Jane is about to leave town immediately ; she will therefore be unable to receive her friends in Whitehall Place this season. But Lord Tiptoff trusts that Mr. Titmarsh will have the kindness to accept some of the produce of her ladyship’s garden and park ; with which, perhaps, he will entertain some of those friends in whose favour he knows so well how to speak.’

Along with this was a little note, containing the words : ‘ Lady Drum at home. Friday evening, June 17.’ And all this came to me because my aunt Hoggarty had given me a diamond-pin !

I did not send back the venison, as why should I ? Gus was for sending it at once to Brough, our director ; and the grapes and peaches to my aunt in Somersetshire.

‘ But no,’ says I, ‘ we’ll ask Bob Swinney and half a dozen more of our gents ; and we’ll have a merry night of it on Saturday.’ And a merry night we had too ; and as we had no wine in the cupboard, we had plenty of ale, and gin-punch afterwards. And Gus sat at the foot of the table, and I at the head ; and we sang songs, both comic and sentimental, and drank toasts ; and I made a speech that there is no possibility of mentioning here, because, *entre nous*, I had quite forgotten in the morning everything that had taken place after a certain period on the night before.

CHAPTER IV

HOW THE HAPPY DIAMOND-WEARER DINES AT PENTONVILLE

I DID not go to the office till half an hour after opening time on Monday. If the truth must be told, I was not sorry to let Hoskins have the start of me, and tell the chaps what had taken place,—for we all have our little vanities, and I liked to be thought well of by my companions.

When I came in, I saw my business had been done, by the way in which the chaps looked at me, especially Abednego, who offered me a pinch out of his gold snuff-box the very first thing. Roundhand shook me, too, warmly by the hand, when he came round to look over my day-book, said I wrote a capital hand (and indeed I believe I do, without any sort of flattery), and invited me for dinner next Sunday, in Myddelton Square. ‘You won’t have,’ said he, ‘quite such a grand turnout as with *your friends at the West End*,’ he said this with a particular accent; ‘but Amelia and I are always happy to see a friend in our plain way,—pale sherry, old port, and cut-and-come-again. Hey?’

I said I would come, and bring Hoskins too.

He answered, that I was very polite, and that he should be very happy to see Hoskins; and we went accordingly, at the appointed day and hour; but though Gus was eleventh clerk and I twelfth, I remarked that at dinner I was helped first and best. I had twice as many forced-meat balls as Hoskins in my mock-turtle, and pretty nearly all the oysters out of the sauce-boat. Once, Roundhand was going to help Gus before me; when his wife, who was seated at the head of the table, looking very big and fierce in red crape and a turban, shouted out, ‘ANTONY!’ and poor R. dropped the plate, and blushed as red as anything. How Mrs. R. did talk to me about the West End, to be sure! She had a *Peerage*, as you may be certain, and knew everything about the Drum family in a manner that quite astonished me. She asked me how much Lord Drum had a year; whether I thought he had twenty, thirty, forty, or a hundred and fifty thousand a year; whether I was invited to Drum Castle: what the young ladies wore, and if they had those odious *gigot* sleeves which were just coming

in then ; and here Mrs. R. looked at a pair of large mottled arms that she was very proud of.

‘ I say, Sam, my boy ! ’ cried, in the midst of our talk, Mr. Roundhand, who had been passing the port wine round pretty freely, ‘ I hope you looked to the main chance, and put in a few shares of the West Diddlesex,—hey ? ’

‘ Mr. Roundhand, have you put up the decanters downstairs ? ’ cries the lady, quite angry, and wishing to stop the conversation.

‘ No, Milly, I’ve *emptied* ’em,’ says R.

‘ Don’t Milly me, sir ! and have the goodness to go down and tell Lancy, my maid (a look at me), to make the tea in the study. We have a gentleman here who is not *used* to Pentonville ways (another look) ; but he won’t mind the ways of *friends*.’ And here Mrs. Roundhand heaved her very large chest, and gave me a third look, that was so severe, that, I declare to goodness, it made me look quite foolish. As to Gus, she never so much as spoke to him all the evening ; but he consoled himself with a great lot of muffins, and sat most of the evening (it was a cruel hot summer) whistling and talking with Roundhand on the veranda. I think I should like to have been with them,—for it was very close in the room with that great, big Mrs. Roundhand squeezing close up to one on the sofa.

‘ Do you recollect what a jolly night we had here last summer ? ’ I heard Hoskins say, who was leaning over the balcony, and ogling the girls coming home from church. ‘ You and me with our coats off, plenty of cold rum-and-water, Mrs. Roundhand at Margate, and a whole box of Manillas ? ’

‘ Hush ! ’ said Roundhand, quite eagerly ; ‘ Milly will hear.’

But Milly didn’t hear ; for she was occupied in telling me an immense long story about her waltzing with the Count de Schloppenzollern, at the city ball to the allied sovereigns ; and how the count had great, large, white moustaches ; and how odd she thought it to go whirling round the room with a great man’s arm round your waist. ‘ Mr. Roundhand has never allowed it since our marriage—never ; but in the year ’fourteen it was considered a proper compliment, you know, to pay the sovereigns. ’ So twenty-nine young ladies, of the best families in the city of London, I assure you, Mr. Titmarsh—there was the Lord Mayor’s

own daughters ; Alderman Dobbin's gals ; Sir Charles Hopper's three, who have the great house in Baker Street ; and your humble servant, who was rather slimmer in those days—twenty-nine of us had a dancing-master on purpose, and practised waltzing in a room over the Egyptian Hall, at the Mansion House. He was a splendid man, that Count Schloppenzollern !

' I am sure, ma'am,' says I, ' he had a splendid partner ! ' and blushed up to my eyes when I said it.

' Get away, you naughty creature ! ' says Mrs. Roundhand, giving me a great slap ; ' you're all the same, you men in the West End—all deceivers. The count was just like you. 'Heigho ! Before you marry, it's all honey and compliments ; when you win us, it's all coldness and indifference. Look at Roundhand, the great baby, trying to beat down a butterfly with his yellow bandanna ! Can a man like *that* comprehend me ? can he fill the void in my heart ? ' (She pronounced it without the *h* ; but, that there should be no mistake, laid her hand upon the place meant.) ' Ah, no ! Will *you* be so neglectful when *you* marry, Mr. Titmarsh ? '

As she spoke, the bells were just tolling the people out of church, and I fell a-thinking of my dear, dear Mary Smith in the country, walking home to her grandmother's, in her modest grey cloak, as the bells were chiming, and the air full of the sweet smell of the hay, and the river shining in the sun, all crimson, purple, gold, and silver. There was my dear Mary a hundred and twenty miles off, in Somersetshire, walking home from church along with Mr. Snorter's family, with which she came and went ; and I was listening to the talk of this great, leering, vulgar woman.

I could not help feeling for a certain half of a sixpence that you have heard me speak of ; and putting my hand mechanically upon my chest, I tore my fingers with the point of my new DIAMOND-PIN. Mr. Polonius had sent it home the night before, and I sported it for the first time at Roundhand's to dinner.

' It's a beautiful diamond,' said Mrs. Roundhand ; ' I have been looking at it all dinner-time. How rich you must be to wear such splendid things ! and how can you remain in a vulgar office in the City,—you who have such great acquaintances at the West End ? '

The woman had somehow put me in such a passion that



Mr. Roundhand looks out of window

I bounced off the sofa, and made for the balcony without answering a word,—aye, and half broke my head against the sash, too, as I went out to the gents in the open air. ‘Gus,’ says I, ‘I feel very unwell : I wish you’d come home with me.’ And Gus did not desire anything better ; for he had ogled the last girl out of the last church, and the night was beginning to fall.

‘What ! already ?’ said Mrs. Roundhand ; ‘there is a lobster coming up,—a trifling refreshment ; not what he’s accustomed to, but——’

I am sorry to say I nearly said, ‘D— the lobster !’ as Roundhand went and whispered to her that I was ill.

‘Aye,’ said Gus, looking very knowing. ‘Recollect, Mrs. R., that he was *at the West End* on Thursday asked to dine, ma’am, with the tip-top nobs. Chaps don’t dine at the West End for nothing, do they, R. ? If you play at *bowls*, you know——’

‘You must look out for *rubbers*,’ said Roundhand, as quick as thought.

‘Not in my house of a Sunday,’ said Mrs. R., looking very fierce and angry. ‘Not a card shall be touched *here*. Are we in a Protestant land, sir ? in a Christian country ?’

‘My dear, you don’t understand. We were not talking of *rubbers* of whist.’

‘There shall be *no* game at all in the house of a Sabbath eve,’ said Mrs. Roundhand ; and out she flounced from the room, without ever so much as wishing us good night.

‘Do stay,’ said the husband, looking very much frightened,—‘do stay. She won’t come back while you’re here ; and I do wish you’d stay so.’

But we wouldn’t : and when we reached Salisbury Square, I gave Gus a lecture about spending his Sundays idly ; and read out one of Blair’s sermons before we went to bed. As I turned over in bed, I could not help thinking about the luck the pin had brought me ; and it was not over yet, as you will see in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

HOW THE DIAMOND INTRODUCES HIM TO A STILL MORE
FASHIONABLE PLACE

To tell the truth, though, about the pin, although I mentioned it almost the last thing in the previous chapter, I assure you it was by no means the last thing in my thoughts. It had come home from Mr. Polonius's, as I said, on Saturday night; and Gus and I happened to be out enjoying ourselves, half-price, at Sadler's Wells; and perhaps we took a little refreshment on our way back; but that has nothing to do with my story.

On the table, however, was the little box from the jeweller's; and when I took it out,—*my*, how the diamond did twinkle and glitter by the light of our one candle!

'I'm sure it would light up the room of itself;' says Gus. 'I've read they do in—in history.'

It was in the history of Cogia Hassan Alhabbal, in the *Arabian Nights*, as I knew very well. But we put the candle out, nevertheless, to try.

'Well, I declare to goodness it does illuminate the whole place!' says Gus; but the fact was, that there was a gas-lamp opposite our window, and I believe that was the reason why we could see pretty well. At least in my bedroom, to which I was obliged to go without a candle, and of which the window looked out on a dead wall, I could not see a wink, in spite of the Hoggarty diamond, and was obliged to grope about in the dark for a pincushion which Somebody gave me (I don't mind owning it was Mary Smith) and in which I stuck it for the night. But, somehow, I did not sleep much for thinking of it, and woke very early in the morning; and, if the truth must be told, stuck it in my night-gown, like a fool, and admired myself very much in the glass.

Gus admired it as much as I did; for since my return, and especially since my venison dinner and drive with Lady Drum, he thought I was the finest fellow in the world, and boasted about his 'West End friend' everywhere.

As we were going to dine at Roundhand's, and I had no

black satin stock to set it off, I was obliged to place it in the frill of my best shirt, which tore the muslin sadly, by the way. However, the diamond had its effect on my entertainers, as we have seen, rather too much perhaps on one of them ; and next day I wore it down at the office, as Gus would make me do, though it did not look near so well in the second day's shirt as on the first day, when the linen was quite clear and bright with Somersetshire washing.

The chaps at the West Diddlesex all admired it hugely, except that snarling Scotchman M'Whirter, fourth clerk,—out of envy because I did not think much of a great yellow stone, named a carum-gorum, or some such thing, which he had in a snuff-mull, as he called it,—all except M'Whirter, I say, were delighted with it ; and Abednego himself, who ought to know, as his father was in the line, told me the jewel was worth at least ten poundsh, and that his governor would give me as much for it.

'That's a proof,' says Roundhand, 'that Tit's diamond is worth at least thirty;' and we all laughed, and agreed it was.

Now, I must confess that all these praises, and the respect that was paid me, turned my head a little ; and as all the chaps said I *must* have a black satin stock to set the stone off, I was fool enough to buy a stock that cost me five-and-twenty shillings, at Ludlam's in Piccadilly ; for Gus said I must go to the best place, to be sure, and have none of our cheap and common East End stuff. I might have had one for sixteen and six in Cheapside, every whit as good ; but when a young lad becomes vain, and wants to be fashionable, you see he can't help being extravagant.

Our director, Mr. Brough, did not fail to hear of the haunch of venison business, and my relationship with Lady Drum and the Right Hon. Edmund Preston ; only Abednego, who told him, said I was her ladyship's first cousin ; and this made Brough think more of me, and no worse than before.

Mr. B. was, as everybody knows, Member of Parliament for Rottenburgh ; and being considered one of the richest men in the city of London, used to receive all the great people of the land at his villa at Fulham ; and we often read in the papers of the rare doings going on there.

Well, the pin certainly worked wonders ; for, not content merely with making me a present of a ride in a countess's

carriage, of a haunch of venison and two baskets of fruit, and the dinner at Roundhand's above described, my diamond had other honours in store for me, and procured me the honour of an invitation to the house of our director, Mr. Brough.

Once a year, in June, that honourable gent gave a grand ball at his house at Fulham; and by the accounts of the entertainment brought back by one or two of our chaps who had been invited, it was one of the most magnificent things to be seen about London. You saw Members of Parliament there as thick as peas in July, lords and ladies without end. There was everything and everybody of the tip-top sort; and I have heard that Mr. Gunter, of Berkeley Square, supplied the ices, supper, and footmen,—though of the latter Brough kept a plenty, but not enough to serve the host of people who came to him. The party, it must be remembered, was *Mrs.* Brough's party, not the gentleman's,—he being in the Dissenting way, would scarcely sanction any entertainments of the kind; but he told his City friends that his lady governed him in everything; and it was generally observed, that most of them would allow their daughters to go to the ball if asked, on account of the immense number of the nobility which our director assembled together: *Mrs.* Roundhand, I know, for one, would have given one of her ears to go; but, as I have said before, nothing would induce Brough to ask her.

Roundhand himself, and Gutch, nineteenth clerk, son of the brother of an East Indian director, were the only two of our gents invited, as we knew very well, for they had received their invitations many weeks before, and bragged about them not a little. But two days before the ball, and after my diamond-pin had had its due effect upon the gents at the office, Abednego, who had been in the directors' room, came to my desk with a great smirk, and said, 'Tit, Mr. B. says, that he expects you will come down with Roundhand to the ball on Thursday.' I thought Moses was joking,—at any rate, that Mr. B.'s message was a queer one; for people don't usually send invitations in that abrupt, peremptory sort of a way; but, sure enough, he presently came down himself, and confirmed it, saying, as he was going out of the office, 'Mr. Titmarsh, you will come down on Thursday to *Mrs.* Brough's party, where you will see some relations of yours.'



Mr. Brough's Ball

' West End again ! ' says that Gus Hoskins ; and accordingly down I went, taking a place in a cab which Roundhand hired for himself, Gutch, and me, and for which he very generously paid eight shillings.

There is no use to describe the grand gala, nor the number of lamps in the lodge and in the garden, nor the crowd of carriages that came in at the gates, nor the troops of curious people outside ; nor the ices, fiddlers, wreaths of flowers, and cold supper within. The whole description was beautifully given in a fashionable paper, by a reporter who observed the same from the Yellow Lion over the way, and told it in his journal in the most accurate manner ; getting an account of the dresses of the great people from their footmen and coachmen, when they came to the ale-house for their porter. As for the names of the guests, they, you may be sure, found their way to the same newspaper ; and a great laugh was had at my expense, because among the titles of the great people mentioned, my name appeared in the list of the ' Honourables.' Next day, Brough advertised ' a hundred and fifty guineas reward for an emerald necklace lost at the party of John Brough, Esq., at Fulham.' Though some of our people said that no such thing was lost at all, and that Brough only wanted to advertise the magnificence of his society ; but this doubt was raised by persons not invited, and envious, no doubt.

Well, I wore my diamond, as you may imagine, and rigged myself in my best clothes, viz., my blue coat and brass buttons before mentioned, nankeen trousers and silk stockings, a white waistcoat, and a pair of white gloves bought for the occasion. But my coat was of country make, very high in the waist and short in the sleeves, and I suppose must have looked rather odd to some of the great people assembled, for they stared at me a great deal, and a whole crowd formed to see me dance, which I did to the best of my power, performing all the steps accurately, and with great agility, as I had been taught by our dancing-master in the country.

And with whom do you think I had the honour to dance ? With no less a person than Lady Jane Preston, who it appears had not gone out of town, and who shook me most kindly by the hand when she saw me, and asked me to dance with her. We had my Lord Tiptoff and Lady Fanny Rakes for our *vis-à-vis*.

You should have seen how the people crowded to look at us, and admired my dancing too, for I cut the very best of capers, quite different to the rest of the gents (my lord among the number), who walked through the quadrille as if they thought it a trouble, and stared at my activity with all their might. But when I have a dance, I like to enjoy myself; and Mary Smith often said I was the very best partner at our assemblies. While we were dancing, I told Lady Jane how Roundhand, Gutch, and I, had come down three in a cab, besides the driver; and my account of our adventures made her ladyship laugh, I warrant you. Lucky it was for me that I didn't go back in the same vehicle; for the driver went and intoxicated himself at the Yellow Lion, threw out Gutch and our head clerk as he was driving them back, and actually fought Gutch afterwards and blacked his eye, because he said that Gutch's red velvet waistcoat frightened the horse.

Lady Jane, however, spared me such an uncomfortable ride home; for she said she had a fourth place in her carriage, and asked me if I would accept it; and positively, at two o'clock in the morning, there was I, after setting the ladies and my lord down, driven to Salisbury Square in a great thundering carriage, with flaming lamps and two tall footmen, who nearly knocked the door and the whole little street down with the noise they made at the rapper. You should have seen Gus's head peeping out of window in his white nightcap! He kept me up the whole night telling him about the ball, and the great people I had seen there; and next day he told at the office my stories, with his own usual embroideries upon them.

'Mr. Titmarsh,' said Lady Fanny, laughing to me, 'who is that great, fat, curious man, the master of the house? Do you know he asked me if you were not related to us? and I said, "Oh, yes, you were."'

'Fanny!' says Lady Jane.

'Well,' answered the other, 'did not grandmamma say Mr. Titmarsh was her cousin?'

'But you know that grandmamma's memory is not very good.'

'Indeed, you're wrong, Lady Jane,' says my lord; 'I think it's prodigious.'

'Yes, but not very—not very accurate.'

'No, my lady,' says I; 'for her ladyship, the Countess

of Drum, said, if you remember, that my friend Gus Hoskins——,

'Whose cause you supported so bravely,' cries Lady Fanny.

'—That my friend Gus is her ladyship's cousin too, which cannot be, for I know all his family; they live in Skinner Street and St. Mary Axe, and are not—not quite so *respectable* as my relatives.'

At this they all began to laugh; and my lord said, rather haughtily,

'Depend upon it, Mr. Titmarsh, that Lady Drum is no more your cousin than she is the cousin of your friend, Mr. Hoskinson.'

'Hoskins, my lord—and so I told Gus; but you see he is very fond of me, and *will* have it that I am related to Lady D.: and, say what I will to the contrary, tells the story everywhere. Though to be sure,' added I, with a laugh, 'it has gained me no small good in my time.' So I described to the party our dinner at Mrs. Roundhand's, which all came from my diamond-pin, and my reputation as a connexion of the aristocracy. Then I thanked Lady Jane handsomely, for her magnificent present of fruit and venison, and told her, that it had entertained a great number of kind friends of mine, who had drunk her ladyship's health with the greatest gratitude.

'*A haunch of venison!*' cried Lady Jane, quite astonished; 'indeed, Mr. Titmarsh, I am quite at a loss to understand you.'

As we passed a gas-lamp, I saw Lady Fanny laughing as usual, and turning her great, arch, sparkling black eyes at Lord Tiptoff.

'Why, Lady Jane,' said he, 'if the truth must out, the great haunch of venison trick was one of this young lady's performing. You must know, that I had received the above-named haunch from Lord Guttlebury's park; and, knowing that Preston is not averse to Guttlebury venison, was telling Lady Drum (in whose carriage I had a seat that day, as Mr. Titmarsh was not in the way), that I intended the haunch for your husband's table. Whereupon my Lady Fanny, clapping together her little hands, declared and vowed that the venison should *not* go to Preston, but should be sent to a gentleman about whose adventures on the day previous we had just been talking,—to Mr. Titmarsh, in

fact, whom Preston, as Fanny vowed, had used most cruelly, and to whom, she said, a reparation was due. So my Lady Fanny insists upon our driving straight to my rooms in the Albany (you know I am only to stay in my bachelor's quarters a month longer)—'

'Nonsense !' says Lady Fanny.

'—Insists upon driving straight to my chambers in the Albany, extracting thence the above-named haunch—'

'Grandmamma was very sorry to part with it,' cries Lady Fanny.

'—And then she orders us to proceed to Mr. Titmarsh's house in the City, where the venison was left, in company with a couple of baskets of fruit bought at Grange's by Lady Fanny herself.'

'And what was more,' said Lady Fanny, 'I made grandmamma go into Fr— into Lord Tiptoff's rooms, and dictated out of my own mouth the letter which he wrote, and pinned up the haunch of venison that his hideous old housekeeper brought us—I'm quite jealous of her—I pinned up the haunch of venison in a copy of the *John Bull* newspaper.'

It had one of the Ramsbottom letters in it, I remember, which Gus and I read on Sunday at breakfast, and we nearly killed ourselves with laughing. The ladies laughed too when I told them this ; and good-natured Lady Jane said she would forgive her sister, and hoped I would too ; which I promised to do as often as her ladyship chose to repeat the offence.

I never had any more venison from the family ; but I'll tell you *what* I had. About a month after, came a card of 'Lord and Lady Tiptoff,' and a great piece of plum-cake, of which, I am sorry to say, Gus ate a great deal too much.

CHAPTER VI

OF THE WEST DIDDLESEX ASSOCIATION, AND OF THE EFFECT
THE DIAMOND HAD THERE

WELL, the magic of the pin was not over yet. Very soon after Mrs. Brough's grand party, our director called me up to his room at the West Diddlesex, and after examining my accounts, and speaking awhile about business, said, 'That's a very fine diamond-pin, Master Titmarsh (he spoke in a grave, patronizing way), and I called you on purpose to speak to you upon the subject. I do not object to seeing the young men of this establishment well and handsomely dressed; but I know that their salaries cannot afford ornaments like those, and I grieve to see you with a thing of such value. You have paid for it, sir—I trust you have paid for it; for, of all things, my dear—dear young friend, beware of debt.'

I could not conceive why Brough was reading me this lecture about debt and my having bought the diamond-pin, as I knew that he had been asking about it already, and how I came by it—Abednego told me so. 'Why, sir,' says I, 'Mr. Abednego told me that he had told you that I had told him——'

'Oh, aye—by the by, now I recollect, Mr. Titmarsh—I *do* recollect—yes; though I suppose, sir, you will imagine that I have other more important things to remember.'

'Oh, sir, in course,' says I.

'That one of the clerks *did* say something about a pin—that one of the other gentlemen had it. And so your pin was given you, was it?'

'It was given me, sir, by my aunt, Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty,' said I, raising my voice, for I was a little proud of Castle Hoggarty.

'She must be very rich to make such presents, Titmarsh?'

'Why, thank you, sir,' says I, 'she *is* pretty well off. Four hundred a year jointure; a farm at Slopperton, sir; three houses at Squashtail; and three thousand two hundred loose cash at the banker's, as I happen to know, sir—that's *all*.'

I did happen to know this, you see, because, while I was down in Somersetshire, Mr. MacManus, my aunt's agent in Ireland, wrote to say that a mortgage she had on Lord Brallaghan's property had just been paid off, and that the money was lodged at Coutts's. Ireland was in a very disturbed state in those days ; and my aunt wisely determined not to invest her money in that country any more, but to look out for some good security in England. However, as she had always received six per cent in Ireland, she would not hear of a smaller interest ; and had warned me, as I was a commercial man, on coming to town, to look out for some means by which she could invest her money at that rate at least.

'And how do you come to know Mrs. Hoggarty's property so accurately ?' said Mr. Brough ; upon which I told him.

'Good heavens, sir ! and do you mean that you, a clerk in the West Diddlesex Assurance Office, applied to by a respectable lady as to the manner in which she should invest property, never spoke to her about the Company which you have the honour to serve ? Do you mean, sir, that you, knowing there was a bonus of five per cent for yourself upon shares taken, did not press Mrs. Hoggarty to join us ?'

'Sir,' says I, 'I'm an honest man, and would not take a bonus from my own relation.'

'Honest I know you are, my boy—give me your hand ! So am I honest—so is every man in this Company honest ; but we must be prudent as well. We have five millions of capital on our books, as you see—five *bona-fide* millions of *bona-fide* sovereigns paid up, sir,—there is no dishonesty there. But why should we not have twenty millions—a hundred millions ? Why should not this be the greatest commercial association in the world ?—as it shall be, sir—it shall, as sure as my name is John Brough, if Heaven bless my honest endeavours to establish it ! But do you suppose that it can be so, unless every man among us use his utmost exertions to forward the success of the enterprise ? Never, sir,—never ; and, for me, I say so everywhere. I glory in what I do. There is not a house in which I enter, but I leave a prospectus of the West Diddlesex. There is not a single tradesman I employ, but has shares in it to some amount. My servants, sir—my very servants and grooms, are bound up with it. And the first question I ask of any

one who applies to me for a place is, Are you insured or a shareholder in the West Diddlesex? the second, Have you a good character? And if the first question is answered in the negative, I say to the party coming to me, Then *be* a shareholder before you ask for a place in my household. Did you not see me—me, John Brough, whose name is good for millions—step out of my coach-and-four into this office, with four pounds nineteen, which I paid in to Mr. Roundhand as the price of half a share for the porter at my lodge-gate? Did you remark that I deducted a shilling from the five pound?’

‘Yes, sir; it was the day you drew out eight hundred and seventy-three, ten and six—Thursday week,’ says I.

‘And why did I deduct that shilling, sir? Because it was *my commission*—John Brough’s commission of five per cent; honestly earned by him, and openly taken. Was there any disguise about it? No. Did I do it for the love of a shilling? No,’ says Brough, laying his hand on his heart, ‘I did it from *principle*—from that motive which guides every one of my actions, as I can look up to Heaven and say. I wish all my young men to see my example, and follow it—I wish—I pray that they may. Think of that example, sir. That porter of mine has a sick wife and nine young children; he is himself a sick man, and his tenure of life is feeble; he has earned money, sir, in my service—sixty pounds and more—it is all his children have to look to—all; but for that, in the event of his death, they would be houseless beggars in the street. And what have I done for that family, sir? I have put that money out of the reach of Robert Gates, and placed it so that it shall be a blessing to his family at his death. Every farthing is invested in shares in this office; and Robert Gates, my lodge-porter, is a holder of three shares in the West Diddlesex Association, and, in that capacity, your master and mine. Do you think I want to *cheat* Gates?’

‘Oh, sir!’ says I.

‘To cheat that poor helpless man, and those tender, innocent children!—you can’t think so, sir; I should be a disgrace to human nature if I did. But what boots all my energy and perseverance? What though I place my friends’ money, my family’s money, my own money—my hopes, wishes, desires, ambitions—all upon this enterprise?’

You young men will not do so. You, whom I treat with love and confidence as my children, make no return to *me*. When I toil, you remain still; when I struggle, you look on. Say the word at once,—you *doubt* me! O heavens, that *this* should be the reward of all my care and love for you!’

Here Mr. Brough was so affected that he actually burst into tears, and I confess I saw in its true light the negligence of which I had been guilty.

‘Sir,’ says I, ‘I am very—very sorry: it was a matter of delicacy, rather than otherwise, which induced me not to speak to my aunt about the West Diddlesex.’

‘Delicacy, my dear, dear boy—as if there can be any delicacy about making your aunt’s fortune! Say indifference to me, say ingratitude, say folly,—but don’t say delicacy—no, no, not delicacy. Be honest, my boy, and call things by their right names—always do.’

‘It *was* folly and ingratitude, Mr. Brough,’ says I; ‘I see it all now; and I’ll write to my aunt this very post.’

‘You had better do no such thing,’ says Brough, bitterly; ‘the stocks are at ninety, and Mrs. Hoggarty can get three per cent for her money.’

‘I *will* write, sir,—upon my word and honour, I will write.’

‘Well, as your honour is passed, you must, I suppose; for never break your word—no, not in a trifle, Titmarsh. Send me up the letter when you have done, and I’ll frank it—upon my word and honour, I will,’ says Mr. Brough, laughing, and holding out his hand to me.

I took it, and he pressed mine very kindly,—‘You may as well sit down here,’ says he, as he kept hold of it; ‘there is plenty of paper.’

And so I sat down and mended a beautiful pen and began, and wrote, ‘Independent West Diddlesex Association, June, 1822,’ and ‘My dear Aunt,’ in the best manner possible. Then I paused a little, thinking what I should next say; for I’ve always found that difficulty about letters. The date and my dear So-and-so one writes off immediately—it is the next part which is hard; and I put my pen in my mouth, flung myself back in my chair, and began to think about it.

‘Bah!’ said Brough, ‘are you going to be about that

letter all day, my good fellow? Listen to me, and I'll dictate to you in a moment.' So he began:—

'MY DEAR AUNT,—Since my return from Somersetshire, I am very happy indeed to tell you, that I have so pleased the managing director of our Association and the Board, that they have been good enough to appoint me third clerk——'

'Sir!' says I.

'Write what I say. Mr. Roundhand, as has been agreed by the Board yesterday, quits the clerk's desk, and takes the title of secretary and actuary. Mr. Highmore takes his place; Mr. Abednego follows him; and I place you as third clerk—as

'third clerk (write), with a salary of a hundred and fifty pounds per annum. This news will, I know, gratify my dear mother and you, who have been a second mother to me all my life.

'When I was last at home, I remember you consulted me as to the best mode of laying out a sum of money which was lying useless in your banker's hands. I have since lost no opportunity of gaining what information I could: and situated here as I am, in the very midst of affairs, I believe, although very young, I am as good a person to apply to as many others of greater age and standing.

'I frequently thought of mentioning to you our Association, but feelings of delicacy prevented me from doing so. I did not wish that any one should suppose that a shadow of self-interest could move me in any way.

'But I believe, without any sort of doubt, that the West Diddlesex Association offers the best security that you can expect for your capital, and, at the same time, the highest interest you can anywhere procure.

'The situation of the Company, as I have it from *the very best authority* (underline that), is as follows:—

'The subscribed and *bona-fide* capital is FIVE MILLIONS STERLING.

'The body of directors you know. Suffice it to say that the managing director is John Brough, Esq., of the firm of Brough and Hoff, a Member of Parliament, and a man as well known as Mr. Rothschild in the city of London. His private fortune, I know for a fact, amounts to half a million, and the last dividends paid to the shareholders of the I. W. D. Association amounted to 6½ per cent per annum.'

[That I know was the dividend declared by us.]

'Although the shares in the market are at a very great premium, it is the privilege of the four first clerks to dispose of a certain number, 5000l. each at par; and if you, my dearest aunt, would wish for 2500l. worth I hope you will allow me to oblige you by offering you so much of my new privileges.

'Let me hear from you immediately upon the subject, as I have already an offer for the whole amount of my shares at market price.'

‘But I haven’t, sir,’ says I.

‘You have, sir. I will take the shares, but I want *you*. I want as many respectable persons in the Company as I can bring. I want you because I like you, and I don’t mind telling you that I have views of my own as well, for I am an honest man and say openly what I mean, and I’ll tell you *why* I want you. I can’t, by the regulations of the Company, have more than a certain number of votes, but if your aunt takes shares, I expect—I don’t mind owning it—that she will vote with me. *Now* do you understand me? My object is to be all in all with the Company; and if I be, I will make it the most glorious enterprise that ever was conducted in the city of London.’

So I signed the letter and left it with Mr. B. to frank.

The next day I went and took my place at the third clerk’s desk, being led to it by Mr. B., who made a speech to the gents, much to the annoyance of the other chaps, who grumbled about their services; though, as for the matter of that, our services were very much alike; the Company was only three years old, and the oldest clerk in it had not six months more standing in it than I. ‘Look out,’ said that envious M’Whirter to me. ‘Have you got money, or have any of your relations money? or are any of them going to put it into the concern?’

I did not think fit to answer him, but took a pinch out of his mull, and was always kind to him; and he, to say the truth, was always most civil to me. As for Gus Hoskins, he began to think I was a superior being; and I must say that the rest of the chaps behaved very kindly in the matter, and said that if one man were to be put over their heads before another, they would have pitched upon me, for I had never harmed any of them, and done little kindnesses to several.

‘I know,’ says Abednego, ‘how you got the place. It was I who got it you. I told Brough you were a cousin of Preston’s, the Lord of the Treasury, had venison from him, and all that; and depend upon it he expects that you will be able to do him some good in that quarter.’

I think there was some likelihood in what Abednego said, because our governor, as we called him, frequently spoke to me about my cousin; told me to push the concern in the West End of the town, get as many noblemen as we could to insure with us, and so on. It was in

vain I said that I could do nothing with Mr. Preston. 'Bah! bah!' says Mr. Brough, 'don't tell *me*. People don't send haunches of venison to you for nothing;' and I'm convinced he thought I was a very cautious, prudent fellow for not bragging about my great family, and keeping my connexion with them a secret. To be sure he might have learned the truth from Gus, who lived with me, but Gus would insist that I was hand in glove with all the nobility, and boasted about me ten times as much as I did myself.

The chaps used to call me the 'West Ender.'

See, thought I, what I have gained by aunt Hoggarty giving me a diamond-pin! what a lucky thing it is that she did not give me the money as I hoped she would! Had I not had the pin—had I even taken it to any other person but Mr. Polonius, Lady Drum would never have noticed me; had Lady Drum never noticed me, Mr. Brough never would, and I never should have been third clerk of the West Diddlesex.

I took heart at all this, and wrote off on the very evening of my appointment to my dearest Mary Smith, giving her warning that a 'certain event,' for which one of us was longing very earnestly, might come off sooner than we had expected. And why not? Miss S.'s own fortune was 70*l.* a year, mine was 150*l.*, and when we had 300*l.* we always vowed we would marry. Ah! thought I, if I could but go to Somersetshire now, I might boldly walk up to old Smith's door (he was her grandfather and a half-pay lieutenant of the navy), I might knock at the knocker and see my beloved Mary in the parlour, and not be obliged to sneak behind hayricks on the look-out for her, or pelt stones at midnight at her window.

My aunt, in a few days, wrote a pretty gracious reply to my letter. She had not determined, she said, as to the manner in which she should employ her three thousand pounds, but should take my offer into consideration, begging me to keep my shares open for a little while, until her mind was made up.

What, then, does Mr. Brough do? I learned afterwards, in the year 1830, when he and the West Diddlesex Association had disappeared altogether, how he had proceeded.

'Who are the attorneys at Slopperton?' says he to me in a careless way.

‘Mr. Ruck, sir,’ says I, ‘is the Tory solicitor, and Messrs. Hodge and Smithers the Liberals.’ I knew them very well, for the fact is, before Mary Smith came to live in our parts, I was rather partial to Miss Hodge, and her great gold-coloured ringlets; but Mary came and soon put *her* nose out of joint, as the saying is.

‘And you are of what politics?’

‘Why, sir, we are Liberals.’ I was rather ashamed of this, for Mr. Brough was an out-and-out Tory; but Hodge and Smithers is a most respectable firm. I brought up a packet from them to Hickson, Dixon, Paxton and Jackson, *our* solicitors, who are their London correspondents.

Mr. Brough only said, ‘Oh, indeed!’ and did not talk any further on the subject, but began admiring my diamond-pin very much.

‘Titmarsh, my dear boy,’ says he, ‘I have a young lady at Fulham who is worth seeing, I assure you, and who has heard so much about you from her father (for I like you, my boy, I don’t care to own it), that she is rather anxious to see you, too. Suppose you come down to us for a week, Abednego will do your work?’

‘Law, sir! you are very kind,’ says I.

‘Well, you shall come down, and I hope you will like my claret. But hark ye! I don’t think, my dear fellow, you are quite smart enough—quite well enough dressed. Do you understand me?’

‘I’ve my blue coat and brass buttons at home, sir.’

‘What! that thing with the waist between your shoulders that you wore at Mrs. Brough’s party?’ (It *was* rather high-waisted, being made in the country two years before.) ‘No—no, that will never do. Get some new clothes, sir,—two new suits of clothes.’

‘Sir!’ says I, ‘I’m already, if the truth must be told, very short of money for this quarter, and can’t afford myself a new suit for a long time to come.’

‘Pooh, pooh! don’t let that annoy you. Here’s a ten-pound note. But no, on second thoughts, you may as well go to my tailor’s. •I’ll drive you down there, and never mind the bill, my good lad!’ And drive me down he actually did, in his grand coach-and-four, to Mr. Von Stiltz, in Clifford Street, who took my measure, and sent me home two of the finest coats ever seen, a dress coat and a frock, a velvet waistcoat, a silk ditto, and three pairs of pantaloons,

of the most beautiful make. Brough told me to get some boots and pumps, and silk stockings for evenings; so that when the time came for me to go down to Fulham, I appeared as handsome as any young nobleman, and Gus said that 'I looked, by jingo, like a regular tip-top swell.'

In the meantime, the following letter had been sent down to Hodge and Smithers:—

'RAM ALLEY, CORNHILL, LONDON,
July, 1822.

'DEAR SIRs,

This part being on private affairs
relative to the cases of
Dixon v. Haggerstony,
Snodgrass v. Rubbidge and another,
I am not permitted
to extract.

'Likewise we beg to hand you a few more prospectuses of the Independent West Diddlesex Fire and Life Assurance Company, of which we have the honour to be the solicitors in London. We wrote to you last year, requesting you to accept the Slopperton and Somerset agency for the same, and have been expecting for some time back that either shares or assurances should be effected by you.

'The capital of the Company, as you know, is five millions sterling (say 5,000,000*l.*), and we are in a situation to offer more than the usual commission to our agents of the legal profession. We shall be happy to give a premium of 6 per cent for shares to the amount of 1,000*l.*, 6½ per cent above a thousand, to be paid immediately upon the taking of the shares.

'I am, dear Sirs, for self and partners,

'Yours most faithfully,

'SAMUEL JACKSON.'

This letter, as I have said, came into my hands some time afterwards. I knew nothing of it in the year 1822, when, in my new suit of clothes, I went down to pass a week at the Rookery, Fulham, residence of John Brough, Esq., M.P.

CHAPTER VII

HOW SAMUEL TITMARSH REACHED THE HIGHEST POINT
OF PROSPERITY

IF I had the pen of a George Robins, I might describe the Rookery properly : suffice it, however, to say, it is a very handsome country place ; with handsome lawns sloping down to the river, handsome shrubberies and conservatories, fine stables, outhouses, kitchen gardens, and everything belonging to a first-rate *rus in urbe*, as the great auctioneer called it when he hammered it down some years after.

I arrived on a Saturday at half an hour before dinner ; a grave gentleman out of livery showed me to my room ; a man in chocolate and gold lace, with Brough's crest on the buttons, brought me a silver shaving-pot of hot water on a silver tray ; and a grand dinner was ready at six, at which I had the honour of appearing in Von Stiltz's dress-coat, and my new silk stockings and pumps.

Brough took me by the hand as I came in, and presented me to his lady, a stout, fair-haired woman, in light blue satin ; then to his daughter, a tall, thin, dark-eyed girl, with beetle-brows, looking very ill-natured, and about eighteen.

'Belinda, my love,' said her papa, 'this young gentleman is one of my clerks, who was at our ball.'

'Oh, indeed !' says Belinda, tossing up her head.

'But not a common clerk, Miss Belinda,—so, if you please, we will have none of your aristocratic airs with him. He is a nephew of the Countess of Drum ; and I hope he will soon be very high in our establishment and in the city of London.'

At the name of Countess (I had a dozen times rectified the error about our relationship), Miss Belinda made a low courtesy, and stared at me very hard, and said she would try and make the Rookery pleasant to any friend of papa's. 'We have not much *monde* to-day,' continued Miss Brough, 'and are only in *petit comité* ; but I hope before you leave us, you will see some *société* that will make your *séjour* agreeable.'

I saw at once that she was a fashionable girl, from her using the French language in this way.

‘Isn’t she a fine girl?’ said Brough, whispering to me, and evidently as proud of her as a man could be. ‘Isn’t she a fine girl—eh, you dog? Do you see breeding like that in Somersetshire.’

‘No, sir, upon my word!’ answered I, rather sily, for I was thinking all the while how ‘Somebody’ was a thousand times more beautiful, simple, and ladylike.

‘And what has my dearest love been doing all day?’ said her papa.

‘Oh, pa! I have *pincéd* the harp a little to Captain Fizgig’s flute. Didn’t I, Captain Fizgig?’

Captain the Hon. Francis Fizgig said, ‘Yes, Brough, your fair daughter *pincéd* the harp, and *touchéd* the piano, and *égratigné*d the guitar, and *écorché*d a song or two; and we had the pleasure of a *promenade à l’eau*,—of a walk upon the water.’

‘Law, captain!’ cries Mrs. Brough, ‘walk on the water?’

‘Hush, mamma, you don’t understand French!’ says Miss Belinda, with a sneer.

‘It’s a sad disadvantage, madam,’ says Fizgig, gravely; ‘and I recommend you and Brough here, who are coming out in the great world, to have some lessons; or at least get up a couple of dozen phrases, and introduce them into your conversation here and there. I suppose, sir, you speak it commonly at the office, or what you call it?’ and Mr. Fizgig put his glass into his eye, and looked at me.

‘We speak English, sir,’ says I, ‘knowing it better than French.’

‘Everybody has not had your opportunities, Miss Brough,’ continued the gentleman. ‘Everybody has not *voyagé* like *nous autres*, hey? *Mais, que voulez-vous*, my good sir? you must stick to your cursed ledgers and things; what’s the French for ledger, Miss Belinda?’

‘How can you ask! *Je n’en sais rien*, I’m sure.’

‘You should learn, Miss Brough,’ said her father. ‘The daughter of a British merchant need not be ashamed of the means by which her father gets his bread. I’m not ashamed—I’m not proud. Those who know John Brough, know that ten years ago he was a poor clerk like my friend Titmarsh here, and is now worth half a million. Is there

any man in the House better listened to than John Brough? Is there any duke in the land that can give a better dinner than John Brough; or a larger fortune to his daughter than John Brough? Why, sir, the humble person now speaking to you could buy out many a German duke! But I'm not proud—no, no, not proud. There's my daughter—look at her—when I die, she will be mistress of my fortune; but am I proud? No! Let him who can win her marry her, that's what I say. Be it you, Mr. Fizzig, son of a peer of the realm; or you, Bill Tidd. Be it a duke or a shoeblack, what do I care, hey?—what do I care?

'O-o-oh!' sighed the gent who went by the name of Bill Tidd, a very pale young man, with a black riband round his neck instead of a handkerchief, and his collars turned down like Lord Byron. He was leaning against the mantelpiece, and with a pair of great green eyes ogling Miss Brough with all his might.

'Oh, John—my dear John!' cried Mrs. Brough, seizing her husband's hand and kissing it, 'you are an angel, that you are!'

'Isabella, don't flatter me, I'm a *man*,—a plain, downright citizen of London, without a particle of pride, except in you and my daughter here—my two Bells, as I call them! This is the way that we live, Titmarsh, my boy: ours is a happy, humble, Christian home, and that's all. Isabella, leave go my hand!'

'Mamma, you mustn't do so before company, it's odious!' shrieked Miss B.; and mamma quietly let the hand fall, and heaved from her ample bosom a great large sigh. I felt a liking for that simple woman, and a respect for Brough too. He *couldn't* be a bad man, whose wife loved him so.

Dinner was soon announced, and I had the honour of leading in Miss B., who looked back rather angrily, I thought, at Captain Fizzig, because that gentleman had offered his arm to Mrs. Brough. He sat on the right of Mrs. Brough, and Miss flounced down on the seat next to him, leaving me and Mr. Tidd to take our places at the opposite side of the table.

At dinner there was turbot and soup first, and boiled turkey afterwards, of course. How is it that at all the great dinners they have this perpetual boiled turkey?

It was real turtle-soup, the first time I had ever tasted it ; and I remarked how Mrs. B., who insisted on helping it, gave all the green lumps of fat to her husband, and put several slices of the breast of the bird under the body, until it came to his turn to be helped.

'I'm a plain man,' says John, 'and eat a plain dinner. I hate your kickshaws, though I keep a French cook for those who are not of my way of thinking. I'm no egotist, look you ; I've no prejudices ; and Miss there has her *béchamels* and fallals according to her taste. Captain, try the *volly vong*.'

We had plenty of champagne and old madeira with dinner, and great silver tankards of porter, which those might take who chose. Brough made especially a boast of drinking beer ; and when the ladies retired, said 'Gentlemen, Tiggins will give you an unlimited supply of wine, there's no stinting here ;' and then laid himself down in his easy chair and fell asleep.

'He always does so,' whispered Mr. Tidd to me.

'Get some of that yellow-sealed wine, Tiggins,' says the captain. 'That other claret we had yesterday is loaded, and disagrees with me infernally !'

I must say I liked the yellow seal much better than aunt Hoggarty's Rosolio.

I soon found out what Mr. Tidd was, and what he was longing for.

'Isn't she a glorious creature ?' says he to me.

'Who, sir ?' says I.

'Miss Belinda, to be sure !' cried Tidd. 'Did mortal ever look upon eyes like hers, or view a more sylph-like figure ?'

'She might have a little more flesh, Mr. Tidd,' says the captain, 'and a little less eyebrow. They look vicious, those scowling eyebrows, in a girl. *Qu'en dites-vous*, Mr. Titmarsh ? as Miss Brough would say.'

'I think it remarkably good claret, sir,' says I.

'Egad, you're the right sort of fellow !' says the captain. '*Volto sciolto*, eh ? You respect our sleeping host yonder ?'

'That I do, sir, as the first man in the City of London, and my managing director.'

'And so do I,' says Tidd ; 'and this day fortnight, when I'm of age, I'll prove my confidence too.'

'As how ?' says I.

‘Why, sir, you must know that I come into—ahem—a considerable property, sir, on the 14th of July, which my father made—in business.’

‘Say at once he was a tailor, Tidd.’

‘He *was* a tailor, sir,—but what of that? I’ve had a university education, and have the feelings of a gentleman; as much—aye, perhaps, and more, than some members of an effete aristocracy.’

‘Tidd, don’t be severe!’ says the captain, drinking a tenth glass.

‘Well, Mr. Titmarsh, when of age I come into a considerable property; and Mr. Brough has been so good as to say, he can get me twelve hundred a year for my twenty thousand pounds, and I have promised to invest them.’

‘In the West Diddlesex, sir?’ says I—‘in our office?’

‘No, in another company, of which Mr. Brough is director, and quite as good a thing. Mr. Brough is a very old friend of my family, sir, and he has taken a great liking to me; and he says that with my talents I ought to get into Parliament; and then—and then! after I have laid out my patrimony, I may look to *matrimony*, you see!’

‘Oh, you designing dog!’ said the captain. ‘When I used to lick you at school, who ever would have thought that I was thrashing a sucking statesman?’

‘Talk away, boys!’ said Brough, waking out of his sleep; ‘I only sleep with half an eye, and hear you all. Yes, you shall get into Parliament, Tidd, my man, or my name’s not Brough! You shall have six per cent for your money, or never believe me! But as for my daughter—ask *her*, and not me. You, or the captain, or Titmarsh, may have her, if you can get her. All I ask in a son-in-law is, that he should be, as every one of you is, an honourable and high-minded man!’

Tidd at this looked very knowing; and, as our host sank off to sleep again, pointed archly at his eyebrows, and wagged his head at the captain.

‘Bah!’ says the captain. ‘I say what I think; and you may tell Miss Brough, if you like;’ and so presently this conversation ended, and we were summoned into coffee; after which the captain sang songs with Miss Brough; and Tidd looked at her and said nothing, and

I looked at prints, and Mrs. Brough sat knitting stockings for the poor. The captain was sneering openly at Miss Brough, and her affected ways and talk; but in spite of his bullying, contemptuous way, I thought she seemed to have a great regard for him, and to bear his scorn very meekly.

At twelve Captain Fizgig went off to his barracks at Knightsbridge, and Tidd and I to our rooms. Next day being Sunday, a great bell woke us at eight, and at nine we all assembled in the breakfast-room, where Mr. Brough read prayers, a chapter, and made an exhortation afterwards, to us and all the members of the household, except the French cook, Monsieur Nongtongpaw, whom I could see from my chair walking about in the shrubberies in his white nightcap, smoking a cigar.

Every morning, on weekdays, punctually at eight, Mr. Brough went through the same ceremony, and had his family to prayers; but though this man was a hypocrite, as I found afterwards, I'm not going to laugh at the family prayers, or say he was a hypocrite *because* he had them: there are many bad and good men who don't go through the ceremony at all; but I am sure the good men would be the better for it, and am not called upon to settle the question with respect to the bad ones; and therefore I have passed over a great deal of the religious part of Mr. Brough's behaviour: suffice it, that religion was always on his lips; that he went to church thrice every Sunday, when he had not a party; and if he did not talk religion with us when we were alone, had a great deal to say upon the subject upon occasions, as I found one day when we had a Quaker and Dissenter party to dine, and when his talk was as grave as that of any minister present. Tidd was not there that day,—for nothing could make him forsake his Byron riband, or refrain from wearing his collars turned down; so he sent Tidd with the buggy to Astley's. 'And hark ye, Titmarsh, my boy,' said he, 'leave your diamond-pin upstairs; our friends to-day don't like such gewgaws; and though, for my part, I am no enemy to harmless ornaments, yet I would not shock the feelings of those who have sterner opinions. You will see that my wife and Miss Brough consult my wishes in this respect.' And so they did,—for they both came down to dinner in black gowns and tippets;

whereas, Miss B. had commonly her dress half off her shoulders.

The captain rode over several times to see us ; and Miss Brough seemed always delighted to see *him*. One day I met him as I was walking out alone by the river, and we had a long talk together.

‘Mr. Titmarsh,’ says he, ‘from what little I have seen of you, you seem to be an honest straight-minded young fellow ; and I want some information that you can give. Tell me, in the first place, if you will—and upon my honour it shall go no farther—about this Insurance Company of yours ? You are in the city, and see how affairs are going on. Is your concern a stable one ?’

‘Sir,’ said I, ‘frankly, then, and upon my honour too, I believe it is. It has been set up only four years, it is true ; but Mr. Brough had a great name when it was established, and a vast connexion. Every clerk in the office has, to be sure, in a manner, paid for his place, either by taking shares himself, or by his relations taking them. I got mine because my mother, who is very poor, devoted a small sum of money that came to us to the purchase of an annuity for herself and a provision for me. The matter was debated by the family and our attorneys, Messrs. Hodge and Smithers, who are very well known in our parts of the country ; and it was agreed on all hands that my mother could not do better with her money for all of us than invest it in this way. Brough alone is worth half a million of money, and his name is a host in itself. Nay, more ; I wrote the other day to an aunt of mine, who has a considerable sum of money in loose cash, and who had consulted me as to the disposal of it, to invest it in our office. Can I give you any better proof of my opinion of its solvency ?’

‘Did Brough persuade you in any way ?’

‘Yes, he certainly spoke to me ; but he very honestly told me his motives, and tells them to us all as honestly. He says, “Gentlemen, it is my object to increase the connexion of the office as much as possible. I want to crush all the other offices in London. Our terms are lower than any office, and we can bear to have them lower, and a great business will come to us that way. But we must work ourselves as well. Every single shareholder and officer of the establishment must exert himself, and

bring us customers,—no matter for how little they are engaged—engage them, that is the great point.” And accordingly our director makes all his friends and servants shareholders; his very lodge-porter yonder is a shareholder; and he thus endeavours to fasten upon all whom he comes near. I, for instance, have just been appointed over the heads of our gents, to a much better place than I held. I am asked down here, and entertained royally; and why? Because my aunt has three thousand pounds which Mr. Brough wants her to invest with us.’

‘That looks awkward, Mr. Titmarsh.’

‘Not a whit, sir; he makes no disguise of the matter. When the question is settled one way or the other, I don’t believe Mr. Brough will take any further notice of me. But he wants me now. This place happened to fall in just at the very moment when he had need of me; and he hopes to gain over my family through me. He told me as much as we drove down. “You are a man of the world, Titmarsh,” said he; “you know that I don’t give you this place because you are an honest fellow, and write a good hand. If I had had a lesser bribe to offer you at the moment, I should only have given you that; but I had no choice, and gave you what was in my power.”’

‘That’s fair enough; but what can make Brough so eager for such a small sum as three thousand pounds?’

‘If it had been ten, sir, he would have been not a bit more eager. You don’t know the City of London, and the passion which our great men in the share-market have for increasing their connexion. Mr. Brough, sir, would canvass and wheedle a chimney-sweep in the way of business. See here is poor Tidd and his twenty thousand pounds. Our director has taken possession of him just in the same way. He wants all the capital he can lay his hands on.’

‘Yes, and suppose he runs off with the capital?’

‘Mr. Brough, of the firm of Brough and Hoff, sir? Suppose the Bank of England runs off! But here we are at the lodge-gate. Let’s ask Gates, another of Mr. Brough’s victims;’ and we went in and spoke to old Gates.

‘Well, Mr. Gates,’ says I, beginning the matter cleverly, ‘you are one of my masters, you know, at the West Diddlesex yonder?’

'Yees, sure,' says old Gates, grinning. He was a retired servant, with a large family come to him in his old age.

'May I ask you what your wages are, Mr. Gates, that you can lay by so much money, and purchase shares in our Company?'

Gates told us his wages; and when we inquired whether they were paid regularly, swore that his master was the kindest gentleman in the world; that he had put two of his daughters into service, two of his sons to charity-schools, made one apprentice, and narrated a hundred other benefits that he had received from the family. Mrs. Brough clothed half the children; master gave them blankets and coats in winter, and soup and meat all the year round. There never was such a generous family, sure, since the world began.

'Well, sir,' said I to the captain, 'does that satisfy you? Mr. Brough gives to these people fifty times as much as he gains from them; and yet he makes Mr. Gates take shares in our Company.'

'Mr. Titmarsh,' says the captain, 'you are an honest fellow; and I confess your argument sounds well. Now, tell me, do you know anything about Miss Brough and her fortune?'

'Brough will leave her everything,—or says so.' But I suppose the captain saw some particular expression in my countenance, for he laughed and said,—

'I suppose, my dear fellow, you think she's dear at the price. Well, I don't know that you are far wrong.'

'Why, then, if I may make so bold, Captain Fizzig, are you always at her heels?'

'Mr. Titmarsh,' says the captain, 'I owe twenty thousand pounds;' and he went back to the house directly, and proposed for her.

I thought this rather cruel and unprincipled conduct on the gentleman's part, for he had been introduced to the family by Mr. Tidd, with whom he had been at school, and had supplanted Tidd entirely in the great heiress's affections. Brough stórméd, and actually swore at his daughter (as the captain told me afterwards), when he heard that the latter had accepted Mr. Fizzig; and at last, seeing the captain, made him give his word that the engagement should be kept secret for a few months. And Captain F. only made a confidant of me, and the

mess, as he said ; but this was after Tidd had paid his twenty thousand pounds over to our governor, which he did punctually when he came of age. The same day, too, he proposed for the young lady, and I need not say was rejected. Presently the captain's engagement began to be whispered about : and all his great relations, the Duke of Doncaster, the Earl of Cingbars, the Earl of Crabs, &c., came and visited the Brough family ; the Hon. Henry Ringwood became a shareholder in our Company, and the Earl of Crabs offered to be. Our shares rose to a premium ; our director, his lady, and daughter were presented at court ; and the great West Diddlesex Association bid fair to be the first assurance office in the kingdom.

A very short time after my visit to Fulham, my dear aunt wrote to me to say that she had consulted with her attorneys, Messrs. Hodge and Smithers, who strongly recommended that she should invest the sum as I advised. She had the sum invested, too, in my name, paying me many compliments upon my honesty and talent, of which, she said, Mr. Brough had given her the most flattering account. And at the same time, my aunt informed me that at her death the shares should be my own. This gave me a great weight in the Company, as you may imagine. At our next annual meeting, I attended in my capacity as a shareholder, and had great pleasure in hearing Mr. Brough, in a magnificent speech, declare a dividend of six per cent, that we all received over the counter.

'You lucky young scoundrel !' said Brough to me ; 'do you know what made me give you your place ?'

'Why, my aunt's money, to be sure, sir,' said I.

'No such thing. Do you fancy I cared for those paltry three thousand pounds ? I was told you were nephew of Lady Drum ; and Lady Drum is grandmother of Lady Jane Preston ; and Mr. Preston is a man who can do us a world of good. I knew that they had sent you venison, and the deuce knows what ; and when I saw Lady Jane at my party shake you by the hand, and speak to you so kindly, I took all Abednego's tales for gospel. *That* was the reason you got the place, mark you, and not on account of your miserable three thousand pounds. Well, sir, a fortnight after you were with us at Fulham, I met Preston in the House, and made a merit of having given the place

to his cousin. "Confound the insolent scoundrel!" said he; "*he* my cousin! I suppose you take all old Drum's stories for true? Why, man, it's her mania; she never is introduced to a man but she finds out a cousinship, and would not fail, of course, with that cur of a Titmarsh!" "Well," said I, laughing, "that cur has got a good place in consequence, and the matter can't be mended." So you see,' continued our director, 'that you were indebted for your place not to your aunt's money, but——'

'But MY AUNT'S DIAMOND-PIN!'

'Lucky rascal!' said Brough, poking me in the side, and going out of the way. And lucky, in faith, I thought I was.

CHAPTER VIII

RELATES THE HAPPIEST DAY OF SAMUEL TITMARSH'S LIFE

I DON'T know how it was that in the course of the next six months Mr. Roundhand, the actuary, who had been such a profound admirer of Mr. Brough and the West Diddlesex Association, suddenly quarrelled with both, and taking his money out of the concern, he disposed of his 5,000*l.* shares to a pretty good profit, and went away, speaking everything that was evil both of the Company and the director.

Mr. Highmore now became secretary and actuary, Mr. Abednego was first clerk, and your humble servant was second in the office at a salary of 250*l.* a year. How unfounded were Mr. Roundhand's aspersions of the West Diddlesex appeared quite clearly at our meeting in January, 1823, when our chief director, in one of the most brilliant speeches ever heard, declared that the half-yearly dividend was 4*l.* per cent, at the rate of 8*l.* per cent per annum, and I sent to my aunt 120*l.* sterling as the amount of the interest of the stock in my name.

My excellent aunt, Mrs. Hoggarty, delighted beyond measure, sent me back 10*l.* for my own pocket, and asked me if she had not better sell Slopperton and Squashtail, and invest all her money in this admirable concern.

On this point I could not surely do better than ask the opinion of Mr. Brough. Mr. B. told me that shares could not be had, but at a premium; but on my representing

that I knew of 5,000*l.* worth, in the market at par, he said,—Well, if so, he would like a fair price for his, and would not mind disposing of 5,000*l.* worth, as he had rather a glut of West Diddlesex shares, and his other concerns wanted feeding with ready money. At the end of our conversation, of which I promised to report the purport to Mrs. Hoggarty, the director was so kind as to say that he had determined on creating a place of private secretary to the managing director, and that I should hold that office with an additional salary of 150*l.*

I had 250*l.* a year, Miss Smith had 70*l.* per annum to her fortune. What had I said should be my line of conduct whenever I could realize 300*l.* a year ?

Gus, of course, and all the gents in our office through him, knew of my engagement with Mary Smith. Her father had been a commander in the navy and a very distinguished officer ; and though Mary, as I have said, only brought me a fortune of 70*l.* a year, and I, as everybody said, in my present position in the office and the city of London, might have reasonably looked out for a lady with much more money ; yet my friends agreed that the connexion was very respectable, and I was content, as who would not have been with such a darling as Mary ? I am sure, for my part, I would not have taken the Lord Mayor's own daughter in place of Mary with a plum to her fortune.

Mr. Brough, of course, was made aware of my approaching marriage, as of everything else relating to every clerk in the office ; and I do believe Abednego told him what we had for dinner every day. Indeed, his knowledge of our affairs was wonderful.

He asked me how Mary's money was invested. It was in the three per cent consols—2,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*

'Remember,' says he, 'my lad, Mrs. Sam Titmarsh that is to be may have seven per cent for her money at the very least, and on better security than the Bank of England ; for is not a Company of which John Brough is the head better than any other Company in England ?' And to be sure I thought he was not far wrong, and promised to speak to Mary's guardians on the subject before our marriage. Lieutenant Smith, her grandfather, had been at the first very much averse to our union. (I must confess that one day finding me alone with her, and kissing, I believe, the tips of her little fingers, he had taken me by the collar and

turned me out of doors.) But Sam Titmarsh, with a salary of 250*l.* a year, a promised fortune of 150*l.* more, and the right-hand man of Mr. John Brough of London, was a very different man from Sam the poor clerk, and the poor clergyman's widow's son ; and the old gentleman wrote me a kind letter enough, and begged me to get him six pairs of lamb's-wool stockings and four ditto waistcoats from Romani's, and accepted them too as a present from me when I went down in June—in happy June of 1823—to fetch my dear Mary away.

Mr. Brough was likewise kindly anxious about my aunt's Slopperton and Squashtail property, which she had not as yet sold, as she talked of doing ; and, as Mr. B. represented, it was a sin and a shame that any person in whom he took such interest, as he did in all the relatives of his dear young friend, should only have three per cent for her money, when she could have eight elsewhere. He always called me Sam now, praised me to the other young men (who brought the praises regularly to me), said there was a cover always laid for me at Fulham, and repeatedly took me thither. There was but little company when I went ; and M'Whirter used to say he only asked me on days when he had his vulgar acquaintances. But I did not care for the great people, not being born in their sphere ; and, indeed, did not much care for going to the house at all. Miss Belinda was not at all to my liking. After her engagement with Captain Fizgig, and after Mr. Tidd had paid his 20,000*l.* and Fizgig's great relations had joined in some of our director's companies, Mr. Brough declared he believed that Captain Fizgig's views were mercenary, and put him to the proof at once, by saying that he must take Miss Brough without a farthing, or not have her at all. Whereupon Captain Fizgig got an appointment in the colonies, and Miss Brough became more ill-humoured than ever. But I could not help thinking she was rid of a bad bargain, and pitying poor Tidd, who came back to the charge again more love-sick than ever, and was rebuffed pitilessly by Miss Belinda. Her father plainly told Tidd, too, that his visits were disagreeable to Belinda, and though he must always love and value him, he begged him to discontinue his calls at the Rookery. Poor fellow ! he had paid his 20,000*l.* away for nothing ! for what was six per cent to him compared to six per cent and the hand of Miss Belinda Brough ?

Well, Mr. Brough pitied the poor love-sick swain, as he called me, so much, and felt such a warm sympathy in my well-being, that he insisted on my going down to Somersetshire with a couple of months' leave : and away I went, as happy as a lark, with a couple of bran-new suits from Von Stiltz's in my trunk (I had them made, looking forward to a certain event), and inside the trunk Lieutenant's Smith's fleecy hosiery, wrapping up a parcel of our prospectuses and two letters from John Brough, Esq., to my mother, our worthy annuitant, and to Mrs. Hoggarty, our excellent shareholder. Mr. Brough said, I was all that the fondest father could wish, that he considered me as his own boy, and that he earnestly begged Mrs. Hoggarty not to delay the sale of her little landed property, as land was high now and *must fall*, as the West Diddlesex Association shares were (comparatively) low, and must inevitably, in the course of a year or two, double, treble, quadruple their present value.

In this way I was prepared, and in this way I took leave of my dear Gus. As we parted in the yard of the Bolt-in-Tun, Fleet Street, I felt that I never should go back to Salisbury Square again, and had made my little present to the landlady's family accordingly. She said I was the respectablest gentleman she had ever had in her house : nor was that saying much, for Bell Lane is in the rules of the Fleet, and her lodgers used commonly to be prisoners on rule from that place. As for Gus, the poor fellow cried and blubbered so that he could not eat a morsel of the muffins and grilled ham with which I treated him for breakfast in the Bolt-in-Tun coffee-house ; and when I went away was waving his hat and his handkerchief so in the archway of the coach-office, that I do believe the wheels of the True Blue went over his toes, for I heard him roaring as we passed through the arch. Ah ! how different were my feelings as I sat proudly there on the box by the side of Jim Ward, the coachman, to those I had the last time I mounted that coach, parting from my dear Mary and coming to London with my DIAMOND-PIN !

When arrived near home (at Grumpley, three miles from our village, where the True Blue generally stops to take a glass of ale at the Poppleton Arms) it was as if our member, Mr. Poppleton himself, was come into the country, so great was the concourse of people assembled round the inn. And there was the landlord of the inn and all the people of the

village. Then there was Tom Wheeler, the postboy from Mrs. Rincer's posting-hotel in our town, and he was riding on the old bay posters, and they, Heaven bless us ! were drawing my aunt's yellow chariot in which she never went out but thrice in a year and in which she sat in her splendid cashmere shawl and a new hat and feather. She waved a white handkerchief out of the window, and Tom Wheeler shouted out huzza, as did a number of the little blackguard boys of Grumpley, who, to be sure, would huzza for anything. What a change on Tom Wheeler's part, however ! I remembered only a few years before how he had whipped me from the box of the chaise, as I was hanging on for a ride behind.

Next to my aunt's carriage came the four-wheeled chaise of Lieutenant Smith, R.N., who was driving his old fat pony with his lady by his side. I looked in the back seat of the chaise, and felt a little sad at seeing that *Somebody* was not there. But, O silly fellow ! there was Somebody in the yellow chariot with my aunt, blushing like a peony, I declare, and looking so happy !—Oh, so happy and pretty ! She had a white dress, and a light blue and yellow scarf, which my aunt said were the Hoggarty colours ; though what the Hoggarties had to do with light blue and yellow, I don't know to this day.

Well, the True Blue guard made a great bellowing on his horn as his four horses dashed away ; the boys shouted again ; I was placed bodkin between Mrs. Hoggarty and Mary ; Tom Wheeler cut into his bays ; the lieutenant (who had shaken me cordially by the hand, and whose big dog did not make the slightest attempt at biting me this time) beat his pony till its fat sides lathered again ; and thus in this, I may say, unexampled procession, I arrived in triumph at our village.

My dear mother and the girls,—Heaven bless them !—nine of them in their nankeen spencers (I had something pretty in my trunk for each of them)—could not afford a carriage, but had posted themselves on the road near the village ; and there was such a waving of hands and handkerchiefs ; and though my aunt did not much notice them, except by a majestic toss of the head, which is pardonable in a woman of her property, yet Mary Smith did even more than I, and waved her hands as much as the whole nine. Ah ! how my dear mother cried and blessed me when we

met, and called me her soul's comfort and her darling boy, and looked at me as if I were a paragon of virtue and genius ; whereas I was only a very lucky young fellow, that by the aid of kind friends had stepped rapidly into a very pretty property.

I was not to stay with my mother,—that had been arranged beforehand ; for though she and Mrs. Hoggarty were not remarkably good friends, yet mother said it was for my benefit that I should stay with my aunt, and so gave up the pleasure of having me with her ; and though hers was much the humbler house of the two, I need not say I preferred it far to Mrs. Hoggarty's more splendid one, let alone the horrible Rosolio, of which I was obliged now to drink gallons.

It was to Mrs. H.'s then we were driven ; and she had prepared a great dinner that evening, and hired an extra waiter ; and on getting out of the carriage, she gave a sixpence to Tom Wheeler, saying that was for himself, and that she would settle with Mrs. Rincer for the horses afterwards. At which Tom flung the sixpence upon the ground, swore most violently, and was very justly called by my aunt an ' impertinent fellow.'

She had taken such a liking to me that she would hardly bear me out of her sight. We used to sit for morning after morning over her accounts, debating for hours together the propriety of selling the Sloperton property (but no arrangement was come to yet about it, for Hodge and Smithers could not get the price she wanted). And, moreover, she vowed that at her decease she would leave every shilling to me.

Hodge and Smithers, too, gave a grand party, and treated me with marked consideration, as did every single person of the village. Those who could not afford to give dinners gave teas, and all drank the health of the young couple ; and many a time after dinner or supper was my Mary made to blush by the allusions to the change in her condition.

The happy day for that ceremony was now fixed, and the 24th July, 1823, saw me the happiest husband of the prettiest girl in Somersetshire. We were married from my mother's house, who would insist upon that at any rate, and the nine girls acted as bridesmaids ; aye ! and Gus Hoskins came from town express to be my groomsman, and had my old room at my mother's, and stayed with her for

a week, and cast a sheep's-eye upon Miss Winny Titmarsh too, my dear fourth sister, as I afterwards learned.

My aunt was very kind upon the marriage ceremony indeed. She had ordered me some weeks previous to order three magnificent dresses for Mary from the celebrated Madame Mantalini of London, and some elegant trinkets and embroidered pocket-handkerchiefs from Howell and James's. These were sent down to me, and were to be *my* present to the bride; but Mrs. Hoggarty gave me to understand that I need never trouble myself about the payment of the bill, and I thought her conduct very generous. Also she lent us her chariot for the wedding journey, and made with her own hands a beautiful crimson-satin reticule for Mrs. Samuel Titmarsh, her dear niece. It contained a huswife completely furnished with needles, &c., for she hoped Mrs. Titmarsh would never neglect her needle; and a purse, containing some silver pennies; and a very curious pocket-piece. 'As long as you keep these, my dear,' said Mrs. Hoggarty, 'you will never want; and fervently—fervently do I pray that you will keep them.' In the carriage-pocket we found a paper of biscuits and a bottle of Rosolio. We laughed at this, and made it over to Tom Wheeler, who, however, did not seem to like it much better than we.

I need not say I was married in Mr. Von Stiltz's coat (the third and fourth coats, Heaven help us! in a year) and that I wore sparkling in my bosom the GREAT HOGGARTY DIAMOND.

CHAPTER IX

BRINGS BACK SAM, HIS WIFE, AUNT, AND DIAMOND, TO LONDON

WE pleased ourselves during the honeymoon with forming plans for our life in London, and a pretty paradise did we build for ourselves! Well, we were but forty years old between us; and, for *my* part, I never found any harm come of castle-building, and a great deal of pleasure.

Before I left London I had, to say the truth, looked round me for a proper place, befitting persons of our small income; and Gus Hoskins and I, who hunted after office-hours in couples, had fixed on a very snug little cottage in Camden

Town, where there was a garden that certain *small people* might play in when they came ; a horse and gig-house, if ever we kept one,—and why not in a few years ?—and a fine healthy air, at a reasonable distance from 'Change ; all for 30*l.* a year. I had described this little spot to Mary as enthusiastically as Sancho describes Lizias to Don Quixote ; and my dear wife was delighted with the prospect of housekeeping there, vowed she would cook all the best dishes herself (especially jam-pudding, of which I confess I am very fond), and promised Gus that he should dine with us at Clematis Bower every Sunday, only he must not smoke those horrid cigars. As for Gus, he vowed he would have a room in the neighbourhood too, for he could not bear to go back to Bell Lane, where we two had been so happy together ; and so good-natured Mary said she would ask my sister Winny to come and keep her company. At which Hoskins blushed, and said, ' Pooh ! nonsense now.'

But all our hopes of a happy, snug Clematis Lodge were dashed to the ground on our return from our little honeymoon excursion, when Mrs. Hoggarty informed us that she was sick of the country, and was determined to go to London with her dear nephew and niece, and keep house for them, and introduce them to her friends in the metropolis.

What could we do ? We wished her at—Bath, certainly not in London. But there was no help for it ; and we were obliged to bring her ; for, as my mother said, if we offended her, her fortune would go out of our family ; and were we two young people not likely to want it ?

So we came to town rather dismally in the carriage ; posting the whole way, for the carriage must be brought, and a person of my aunt's rank in life could not travel by the stage. And I had to pay 14*l.* for the posterns, which pretty nearly exhausted all my little hoard of cash.

First we went into lodgings,—into three sets in three weeks. We quarrelled with the first landlady, because my aunt vowed that she cut a slice off the leg of mutton which was served for our dinner ; from the second lodgings we went because aunt vowed the maid would steal the candles ; from the third we went because aunt Hoggarty came down to breakfast the morning after our arrival with her face shockingly swelled and bitten by—never mind what. To cut a long tale short, I was half mad with the continual

choppings and changings, and the long stories and scoldings of my aunt. As for her great acquaintances, none of them were in London; and she made it a matter of quarrel with me that I had not introduced her to John Brough, Esquire, M.P., and to Lord and Lady Tiptoff, her relatives.

Mr. Brough was at Brighton when we arrived in town; and on his return I did not care at first to tell our director that I had brought my aunt with me, or mention my embarrassments for money. He looked rather serious when perforce I spoke of the latter to him, and asked for an advance; but when he heard that my lack of money had been occasioned by the bringing of my aunt to London, his tone instantly changed. 'That, my dear boy, alters the question; Mrs. Hoggarty is of an age when all things must be yielded to her. Here are a hundred pounds; and I beg you to draw upon me whenever you are in the least in want of money.' This gave me breathing time until she should pay her share of the household expenses. And the very next day Mr. and Mrs. John Brough, in their splendid carriage-and-four, called upon Mrs. Hoggarty and my wife in our lodgings in Lamb's Conduit Street.

It was on the very day when my poor aunt appeared with her face in that sad condition; and she did not fail to inform Mrs. Brough of the cause, and to state that at Castle Hoggarty, or at her country place in Somersetshire, she had never heard or thought of such vile odious things.

'Gracious Heavens!' shouted John Brough, Esquire, 'a lady of your rank to suffer in this way!—the excellent relative of my dear boy Titmarsh! Never, madam—never let it be said that Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty should be subject to such horrible humiliation, while John Brough has a home to offer her,—a humble, happy, Christian home, madam, though unlike, perhaps, the splendour to which you have been accustomed in the course of your distinguished career. Isabella, my love!—Belinda! speak to Mrs. Hoggarty. Tell her that John Brough's house is hers from garret to cellar. I repeat it, madam, from garret to cellar. I desire—I insist—I order, that Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty's trunks should be placed this instant in my carriage! Have the goodness to look to them yourself, Mrs. Titmarsh, and see that your dear aunt's comforts are better provided for than they have been.'

Mary went away rather wondering at this order. But,

to be sure, Mr. Brough was a great man, and her Samuel's benefactor; and though the silly child absolutely began to cry as she packed and toiled at aunt's enormous valises, yet she performed the work, and came down with a smiling face to my aunt, who was entertaining Mr. and Mrs. Brough with a long and particular account of the balls at the Castle, in Dublin, in Lord Charleville's time.

'I have packed the trunks, aunt, but I am not strong enough to bring them down,' said Mary.

'Certainly not, certainly not,' said John Brough, perhaps a little ashamed. 'Hallo! George, Frederic, Augustus, come upstairs this instant, and bring down the trunks of Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty, which this young lady will show you.'

Nay, so great was Mr. Brough's condescension, that when some of his fashionable servants refused to meddle with the trunks, he himself seized a pair of them with both hands, carried them to the carriage, and shouted loud enough for all Lamb's Conduit Street to hear, 'John Brough is not proud—no, no; and if his footmen are too high and mighty, he'll show them a lesson of humility.'

Mrs. Brough was for running downstairs too, and taking the trunks from her husband, but they were too heavy for her; so she contented herself with sitting on one, and asking all persons who passed her, whether John Brough was not an angel of a man?

In this way it was that my aunt left us. I was not aware of her departure, for I was at the office at the time; and strolling back at five with Gus, saw my dear Mary smiling and bobbing from the window, and beckoning to us both to come up. This I thought was very strange, because Mrs. Hoggarty could not abide Hoskins, and indeed had told me repeatedly that either she or he must quit the house. Well, we went upstairs, and there was Mary, who had dried her tears, and received us with the most smiling of faces, and laughed and clapped her hands, and danced, and shook Gus's hand. And what do you think the little rogue proposed? I am blest if she did not say she would like to go to Vauxhall!

As dinner was laid for three persons only, Gus took his seat with fear and trembling; and then Mrs. Sam Titmarsh related the circumstances which had occurred, and how Mrs. Hoggarty had been whisked away to Fulham in

Mr. Brough's splendid carriage-and-four. 'Let her go,' I am sorry to say, said I; and, indeed, we relished our veal cutlets and jam-pudding a great deal more than Mrs. Hoggarty did her dinner off plate at the Rookery.

We had a very merry party to Vauxhall, Gus insisting on standing treat; and you may be certain that my aunt, whose absence was prolonged for three weeks, was heartily welcome to remain away, for we were much merrier and more comfortable without her. My little Mary used to make my breakfast before I went to office of mornings; and on Sundays we had a holiday, and saw the dear little children eat their boiled beef and potatoes at the Foundling, and heard the beautiful music; but, beautiful as it is, I think the children were a more beautiful sight still, and the look of their innocent happy faces was better than the best sermon. On weekdays Mrs. Titmarsh would take a walk about five o'clock in the evening, on the *left-hand* side of Lamb's Conduit Street (as you go to Holborn)—aye, and sometimes pursue her walk as far as Snow Hill, when two young gents from the I. W. D. Fire and Life were pretty sure to meet her; and then how happily we all trudged off to dinner! Once we came up as a monster of a man, with high heels and a gold-headed cane, and whiskers all over his face, was grinning under Mary's bonnet, and chattering to her close to Day and Martin's blacking manufactory (not near such a handsome thing then as it is now)—there was the man chattering and ogling his best, when who should come up but Gus and I? And in the twinkling of a pegpost, as Lord Duberley says, my gentleman was seized by the collar of his coat, and found himself sprawling under a stand of hackney coaches, where all the watermen were grinning at him. The best of it was, he left his *head of hair and whiskers* in my hand; but Mary said, 'Don't be hard upon him, Samuel; it's only a Frenchman.' And so we gave him his wig back, which one of the grinning stable-boys put on and carried to him as he lay in the straw.

He shrieked out something about '*arrêtez*,' and '*Français*,' and '*champ d'honneur*'; but we walked on, Gus putting his thumb to his nose, and stretching out his fingers at Master Frenchman. This made everybody laugh; and so the adventure ended.

About ten days after my aunt's departure came a letter from her, of which I give a copy :—

MY DEAR NEPHEW,—It was my earnest wish e'er this to have returned to London, where I am sure you and my niece Titmarsh miss me very much, and where she, poor thing, quite inexperienced in the ways of 'the great metropolis,' in economy, and indeed in every quality requisite in a good wife and the mistress of a family, can hardly manage, I am sure, without me.

Tell her on no account to pay more than 6½*d.* for the prime pieces, 4½*d.* for soup meat; and that the very best of London butter is to be had for 8½*d.*; of course, for puddings and the kitchen you'll employ a commoner sort. My trunks were sadly packed by Mrs. Titmarsh, and the hasp of the portmanteau-lock has gone through my yellow satin. I have darned it, and worn it already twice, at two elegant (though quiet) evening parties given by my hospitable host; and my pegreen velvet on Saturday at a grand dinner, when Lord Scaramouch handed me to table. Everything was in the most sumptuous style. Soup top and bottom (white and brown), removed by turbot and salmon with immense bowls of lobster-sauce. Lobsters alone cost 15*s.* Turbot, three guineas. The whole salmon, weighing, I'm sure 15*lbs.*, and never seen at table again; not a bit of pickled salmon the whole week afterwards. This kind of extravagance would just suit Mrs. Sam Titmarsh, who as I always say, burns the candle at both ends. Well, young people, it is lucky for you you have an old aunt who knows better, and has a long purse, without which, I dare say, some folks would be glad to see her out of doors. I don't mean you, Samuel, who have, I must say, been a dutiful nephew to me. Well, I dare say I shan't live long, and some folks won't be sorry to have me in my grave.

Indeed, on Sunday I was taken in my stomach very ill, and thought it might have been the lobster-sauce; but Doctor Blogg, who was called in said it was, he very much feared, *consumptive*; but gave me some pills and a draft which made me better. Please call upon him—he lives at Pimlico, and you can walk out there after office hours—and present him with 1*l.* 1*s.*, with my compliments. I have no money here but a 10*l.* note, the rest being locked up in my box at Lamb's Conduit Street.

Although the flesh is not neglected in Mr. B.'s sumptuous establishment, I can assure you the *sperrit* is likewise cared for. Mr. B. reads and expounds every morning; and so but his exercises refresh the hungry soul before breakfast! Everything is in the handsomest style,—silver and gold plate at breakfast, lunch, and dinner; and his crest and motto, a behive, with the Latin word *Industria*, meaning industry, on everything—even on the chancy jugs and things in my bed-room. On Sunday we were favoured by a special outpouring from the Rev. Grimes Wapshot, of the Amabaptist Congregation here, and who egshotted for 3 hours in the afternoon in Mr. B.'s private chapel. As the widow of a Hoggarty, I have always been

a staunch supporter of the established Church of England and Ireland ; but I must say Mr. Wapshot's stirring way was far superior to that of the Rev. Bland Blenkinsop of the Establishment, who lifted up his voice after dinner for a short discourse of two hours.

Mrs. Brough is, between ourselves, a poor creature, and has no sperrit of her own. As for Miss B., she is so saucy that once I promised to box her years ; and would have left the house, had not Mr. B. taken my part, and Miss made me a suitable apology.

I don't know when I shall return to town, being made really so welcome here. Doctor Blogg says the air of Fulham is the best in the world for my simtums ; and as the ladies of the house do not choose to walk out with me, the Rev. Grimes Wapshot has often been kind enough to lend me his arm, and 'tis sweet with such a guide to wander both to Putney and Wandsworth, and igsamin the wonderful works of nature. I have spoke to him about the Slopper-ton property, and he is not of Mr. B.'s opinion that I should sell it ; but on this point I shall follow my own counsel.

Meantime you must gett into more comfortable lodgings, and lett my bedd be warmed every night, and of rainy days have a fire in the grate ; and let Mrs. Titmarsh look up my blew silk dress, and turn it against I come ; and there is my purple spencer she can have for herself ; and I hope she does not wear those three splendid gowns you gave her, but keep them until *better times*. I shall soon introduse her to my friend Mr. Brough, and others of my acquaintances ; and am always

YOUR LOVING AUNT.

I have ordered a chest of the Rosolio to be sent from Somersetshire. When it comes, please to send half down here (paying the carriage, of course). 'Twill be an acceptable present to my kind entertainer, Mr. B.

This letter was brought to me by Mr. Brough himself at the office ; who apologized to me for having broken the seal by inadvertence ; for the letter had been mingled with some more of his own, and he opened it without looking at the superscription. Of course he had not read it, and I was glad of that ; for I should not have liked him to see my aunt's opinion of his daughter and lady.

The next day a gentleman at Tom's Coffee-house, Cornhill, sent me word at the office that he wanted particularly to speak to me ; and I stepped thither, and found my old friend Smithers, of the house of Hodge and Smithers, just off the coach, with his carpet-bag between his legs.

'Sam, my boy,' said he, 'you are your aunt's heir, and I have a piece of news for you regarding her property which you ought to know. She wrote us down a letter for a chest of that home-made wine of hers which she calls

Rosolio, and which lies in our warehouse along with her furniture.'

'Well,' says I, smiling, 'she may part with as much Rosolio as she likes for me. I cede all my right.'

'Psha!' says Smithers, 'it's not that, though her furniture puts us to a deuced inconvenience, to be sure—it's not that; but, in the postscript of her letter, she orders us to advertise the Slopperton and Squashtail estates for immediate sale, as she purposes placing her capital elsewhere.'

I knew that the Slopperton and Squashtail property had been the source of a very pretty income to Messrs. Hodge and Smithers, for aunt was always at law with her tenants, and paid dearly for her litigious spirit; so that Mr. Smithers' concern regarding the sale of it did not seem to me to be quite disinterested.

'And did you come to London, Mr. Smithers, expressly to acquaint me with this fact? It seems to me you had much better have obeyed my aunt's instructions at once, or go to her at Fulham, and consult with her on this subject.'

'Sdeath, Mr. Titmarsh! don't you see that if she makes a sale of her property, she will hand over the money to Brough; and if Brough gets the money, he—'

'Will give her seven per cent for it instead of three,—there's no harm in that.'

'But there's such a thing as security, look you. He is a warm man, certainly—very warm—quite respectable—most undoubtedly respectable. But who knows? A panic may take place; and then these five hundred companies in which he is engaged may bring him to ruin. There's the Ginger Beer Company, of which Brough is a director; awkward reports are abroad concerning it. The Consolidated Baffin's Bay Muff and Tippet Company—the shares are down very low, and Brough is a director there. The Patent Pump Company—shares at 65, and a fresh call, which nobody will pay.'

'Nonsense, Mr. Smithers! Has not Mr. Brough five hundred thousand pounds' worth of shares in the INDEPENDENT WEST DIDDLESEX, and is THAT at a discount? Who recommended my aunt to invest her money in that speculation, I should like to know?' I had him there.

'Well, well, it is a very good speculation, certainly, and

has brought you three hundred a year, Sam, my boy ; and you may thank us for the interest we took in you (indeed, we loved you as a son, and Miss Hodge has not recovered a certain marriage yet). You don't intend to rebuke us for making your fortune, do you ? '

'No, hang it, no !' says I, and shook hands with him, and accepted a glass of sherry and biscuits, which he ordered forthwith.

Smithers returned, however, to the charge,—'Sam,' he said, 'mark my words, and *take your aunt away from the Rookery*. She wrote to Mrs. S. a long account of a reverend gent with whom she walks out there,—the Rev. Grimes Wapshot. That man has an eye upon her. He was tried at Lancaster in the year '14 for forgery, and narrowly escaped with his neck. Have a care of him—he has an eye to her money.'

'Nay,' said I, taking out Mrs. Hoggarty's letter, 'read for yourself.'

He read it over very carefully, seemed to be amused by it, and as he returned it to me, 'Well, Sam,' he said, 'I have only two favours to ask of you,—one is not to mention that I am in town to any living soul, and the other is to give me a dinner in Lamb's Conduit Street with your pretty wife.'

'I promise you both gladly,' I said, laughing. 'But if you dine with us, your arrival in town must be known, for my friend Gus Hoskins dines with us likewise ; and has done so nearly every day since my aunt went.'

He laughed too, and said, 'We must swear Gus to secrecy over a bottle.' And so we parted till dinner-time.

The indefatigable lawyer pursued his attack after dinner, and was supported by Gus and by my wife too, who certainly was disinterested in the matter—more than disinterested, for she would have given a great deal to be spared my aunt's company. But she said she saw the force of Mr. Smithers's arguments, and I admitted their justice with a sigh. However, I rode my high horse, and vowed that my aunt should do what she liked with her money ; and that I was not the man who would influence her in any way in the disposal of it.

After tea, the two gents walked away together, and Gus told me that Smithers had asked him a thousand questions about the office, about Brough, about me and my wife,

and everything concerning us. 'You are a lucky fellow, Mr. Hoskins, and seem to be the friend of this charming young couple,' said Smithers; and Gus confessed he was, and said he had dined with us fifteen times in six weeks, and that a better and more hospitable fellow than I did not exist. This I state not to trumpet my own praises,—no, no; but because these questions of Smithers's had a good deal to do with the subsequent events narrated in this little history.

Being seated at dinner the next day off the cold leg of mutton that Smithers had admired so the day before, and Gus as usual having his legs under our mahogany, a hackney-coach drove up to the door, which we did not much heed; a step was heard on the floor, which we hoped might be for the two-pair lodger, and who should burst into the room but Mrs. Hoggarty herself! Gus, who was blowing the froth off a pot of porter preparatory to a delicious drink of the beverage, and had been making us die of laughing with his stories and jokes, laid down the pewter pot as Mrs. H. came in, and looked quite sick and pale. Indeed we all felt a little uneasy.

My aunt looked haughtily in Mary's face, then fiercely at Gus, and saying, 'It is too true—my poor boy—*already*!' flung herself hysterically into my arms, and swore, almost choking, that she would never, never leave me.

I could not understand the meaning of this extraordinary agitation on Mrs. Hoggarty's part, nor could any of us. She refused Mary's hand when the poor thing rather nervously offered it; and when Gus timidly said, 'I think, Sam, I'm rather in the way here, and perhaps—had better go,' Mrs. H. looked him full in the face, pointed to the door majestically with her forefinger, and said, 'I think, sir, you *had* better go.'

'I hope Mr. Hoskins will stay as long as he pleases,' said my wife, with spirit.

'*Of course* you hope so, madam,' answered Mrs. Hoggarty, very sarcastic. But Mary's speech and my aunt's were quite lost upon Gus; for he had instantly run to his hat, and I heard him tumbling downstairs.

The quarrel ended, as usual, by Mary's bursting into a fit of tears, and by my aunt's repeating the assertion that it was not too late, she trusted; and from that day forth she would never, never leave me.

‘What could have made aunt return and be so angry?’ said I to Mary, that night as we were in our own room; but my wife protested she did not know; and it was only some time after that I found out the reason of this quarrel, and of Mrs. H.’s sudden reappearance.

The horrible, fat, coarse little Smithers told me the matter as a very good joke, only the other year, when he showed me the letter of Hickson, Dixon, Paxton, and Jackson, which has before been quoted in my Memoirs.

‘Sam, my boy,’ said he, ‘you were determined to leave Mrs. Hoggarty in Brough’s clutches at the Rookery, and I was determined to have her away. I resolved to kill two of your mortal enemies with one stone, as it were. It was quite clear to me that the Rev. Grimes Wapshot had an eye to your aunt’s fortune; and that Mr. Brough had similar predatory intentions regarding her. Predatory is a mild word, Sam; if I had said robbery at once, I should express my meaning clearer.

‘Well, I took the Fulham stage, and, arriving, made straight for the lodgings of the reverend gentleman. “Sir,” said I, on finding that worthy gent,—he was drinking warm brandy-and-water, Sam, at two o’clock in the day, or at least the room smelt very strongly of that beverage—“Sir,” says I, “you were tried for forgery in the year ’14, at Lancaster assizes.”

“And acquitted, sir. My innocence was by Providence made clear,” said Wapshot.

“But you were not acquitted of embezzlement in ’16, sir,” says I, “and passed two years in York jail in consequence.” I knew the fellow’s history, for I had a writ out against him when he was a preacher at Clifton. I followed up my blow. “Mr. Wapshot,” said I, “you are making love to an excellent lady now at the house of Mr. Brough; if you do not promise to give up all pursuit of her, I will expose you.”

“I *have* promised,” said Wapshot, rather surprised, and looking more easy. “I have given my solemn promise to Mr. Brough, who was with me this very morning, storming, and scolding, and swearing. O sir, it would have frightened you to hear a Christian babe like him swear as he did.”

“Mr. Brough been here?” says I, rather astonished.

“Yes; I suppose you are both here on the same scent,”

says Wapshot. "You want to marry the widow with the Slopperton and Squashtail estate, do you? Well, well, have your way. I've promised not to have anything more to do with the widow, and a Wapshot's honour is sacred."

"I suppose, sir," says I, "Mr. Brough has threatened to kick you out of doors if you call again."

"You *have* been with him, I see," says the reverend gent, with a shrug; and then I remembered what you had told me of the broken seal of your letter, and have not the slightest doubt that Brough opened and read every word of it.

'Well, the first bird was bagged: both I and Brough had had a shot at him. Now I had to fire at the whole Rookery; and off I went, primed and loaded, sir,—primed and loaded.

'It was past eight when I arrived, and I saw, after I passed the lodge-gates, a figure that I knew, walking in the shrubbery—that of your respected aunt, sir: but I wished to meet the amiable ladies of the house before I saw her; because, look, friend Titmarsh, I saw by Mrs. Hoggarty's letter, that she and they were at daggers drawn, and hoped to get her out of the house at once by means of a quarrel with them.'

I laughed, and owned that Mr. Smithers was a very cunning fellow.

'As luck would have it,' continued he, 'Miss Brough was in the drawing-room twangling on a guitar, and singing most atrociously out of tune; but as I entered at the door, I cried "Hush!" to the footman, as loud as possible, and then stood stock-still, and then walked forward on tiptoe lightly. Miss B. could see in the glass every movement that I made; she pretended not to see, however, and finished the song with a regular roulade.

"Gracious Heaven!" said I, "do, madam, pardon me for interrupting that delicious harmony,—for coming unaware upon it, for daring uninvited to listen to it."

"Do you come for mamma, sir?" said Miss Brough, with as much graciousness as her physiognomy could command. "I am Miss Brough, sir."

"I wish, madam, you would let me not breathe a word regarding my business until you have sung another charming strain."

‘She did not sing, but looked pleased, and said, “La! sir, what is your business?”’

“My business is with a lady, your respected father’s guest in this house.”

“Oh, Mrs. Hoggarty!” says Miss Brough, flouncing towards the bell, and ringing it. “John, send to Mrs. Hoggarty, in the shrubbery; here is a gentleman who wants to see her.”

“I know,” continued I, “Mrs. Hoggarty’s peculiarities as well as any one, madam; and aware that those and her education are not such as to make her a fit companion for you: I know you do not like her: she has written to us in Somersetshire that you do not like her.”

“What! she has been abusing us to her friends, has she?” cried Miss Brough (it was the very point I wished to insinuate). “If she does not like us, why does she not leave us?”

“She *has* made rather a long visit,” said I; “and I am sure that her nephew and niece are longing for her return. Pray, madam, do not move, for you may aid me in the object for which I come.”

‘The object for which I came, sir, was to establish a regular battle-royal between the two ladies, at the end of which I intended to appeal to Mrs. Hoggarty, and say that she ought really no longer to stay in a house with the members of which she had such unhappy differences. Well, sir, the battle-royal was fought,—Miss Belinda opening the fire, by saying she understood Mrs. Hoggarty had been calumniating her to her friends. But though at the end of it Miss rushed out of the room in a rage, and vowed she would leave her home unless that odious woman left it, your dear aunt said, “Ha, ha! I know the minx’s vile stratagems; but, thank Heaven! I have a good heart, and my religion enables me to forgive her. I shall not leave her excellent papa’s house, or vex by my departure that worthy, admirable man.”’

‘I then tried Mrs. H. on the score of compassion. “Your niece,” said I, “Mrs. Titmarsh, madam, has been of late, Sam says, rather poorly,—qualmish of mornings, madam,—a little nervous, and low in spirits,—symptoms, madam, that are scarcely to be mistaken in a young married person.”’

‘Mrs. Hoggarty said she had an admirable cordial that

she would send Mrs. Samuel Titmarsh, and she was perfectly certain it would do her good.

‘With very great unwillingness I was obliged now to bring my last reserve into the field, and may tell you what that was, Sam, my boy, now that the matter is so long passed. “Madam,” said I, “there’s a matter about which I must speak, though indeed I scarcely dare. I dined with your nephew yesterday, and met at his table a young man—a young man of low manners, but evidently one who has blinded your nephew, and I too much fear has succeeded in making an impression upon your niece. His name is Hoskins, madam ; and when I state that he who was never in the house during your presence there, has dined with your too-confiding nephew sixteen times in three weeks, I may leave you to imagine what I dare not—dare not imagine myself.”’

‘The shot told. Your aunt bounced up at once, and in ten minutes more was in my carriage, on our way back to London. There, sir, was not *that* generalship ?’

‘And you played this pretty trick off at my wife’s expense, Mr. Smithers,’ said I.

‘At your wife’s expense, certainly ; but for the benefit of both of you.’

‘It’s lucky, sir, that you are an old man,’ I replied, ‘and that the affair happened ten years ago ; or, by the Lord, Mr. Smithers, I would have given you such a horse-whipping as you never heard of !’

But this was the way in which Mrs. Hoggarty was brought back to her relatives ; and this was the reason why we took that house in Bernard Street, the doings at which must now be described.

CHAPTER X

OF SAM'S PRIVATE AFFAIRS, AND OF THE FIRM OF BROUGH
AND HOFF

WE took a genteel house in Bernard Street, Russell Square; and my aunt sent for all her furniture from the country, which would have filled two such houses, but which came pretty cheap to us young housekeepers, as we had only to pay the carriage of the goods from Bristol.

When I brought Mrs. H. her third half-year's dividend, having not for four months touched a shilling of her money, I must say she gave me 50*l.* of the 80*l.*, and told me that was ample pay for the board and lodging of a poor old woman like her, who did not eat more than a sparrow.

I have myself, in the country, seen her eat nine sparrows in a pudding; but she was rich, and I could not complain. If she saved 600*l.* a-year, at the least, by living with us, why all the savings would one day come to me; and so Mary and I consoled ourselves, and tried to manage matters as well as we might. It was no easy task to keep a mansion in Bernard Street, and save money out of 470*l.* a-year, which was my income. But what a lucky fellow I was to have such an income!

As Mrs. Hoggarty left the Rookery in Smithers's carriage, Mr. Brough, with his four greys, was entering the lodge-gate; and I should like to have seen the looks of these two gentlemen, as the one was carrying the other's prey off, out of his own very den, under his very nose.

He came to see her the next day, and protested that he would not leave the house until she left it with him; that he had heard of his daughter's infamous conduct, and had seen her in tears—'in tears, madam, and on her knees, imploring Heaven to pardon her!' But Mr. B. was obliged to leave the house without my aunt, who had a *causa major* for staying, and hardly allowed poor Mary out of her sight,—opening every one of the letters that came into the house directed to my wife, and suspecting hers to everybody. Mary never told me of all this pain for many, many years afterwards; but had always a smiling

face for her husband when he came home from his work. As for poor Gus, my aunt had so frightened him, that he never once showed his nose in the place all the time we lived there ; but used to be content with news of Mary, of whom he was as fond as he was of me.

Mr. Brough, when my aunt left him, was in a furious ill humour with me. He found fault with me ten times a day, and openly, before the gents of the office ; but I let him one day know pretty smartly that I was not only a servant, but a considerable shareholder in the Company ; that I defied him to find fault with my work or my regularity ; and that I was not minded to receive any insolent language from him or any man. He said it was always so ; that he had never cherished a young man in his bosom, but the ingrate had turned on him ; that he was accustomed to wrong and undutifulness from his children, and that he would pray that the sin might be forgiven me. A moment before, he had been cursing and swearing at me, and speaking to me as if I had been his shoeblack. But, look you, I was not going to put up with any more of Madam Brough's airs, or of his. With *me* they might act as they thought fit ; but I did not choose that my wife should be passed over by them as she had been in the matter of the visit to Fulham.

Brough ended by warning me of Hodge and Smithers. 'Beware of these men,' said he ; 'but for my honesty, your aunt's landed property would have been sacrificed by these cormorants ; and when, for her benefit—which you, obstinate young man, will not perceive—I wished to dispose of her land, her attorneys actually had the audacity—the un-Christian avarice I may say—to ask 10 per cent commission on the sale.'

There might be some truth in this, I thought ; at any rate, when rogues fall out, honest men come by their own : and now I began to suspect, I am sorry to say, that both the attorney and the director had a little of the rogue in their composition. It was especially about my wife's fortune that Mr. B. showed *his* cloven foot ; for proposing, as usual, that I should purchase shares with it in our Company, I told him that my wife was a minor, and as such her little fortune was vested out of my control altogether. He flung away in a rage at this ; and I soon saw that he did not care for me any more, by Abednego's

manner to me. No more holidays, no more advances of money, had I; on the contrary, the private clerkship at 150*l.* was abolished, and I found myself on my 250*l.* a year again. Well; what then? it was always a good income, and I did my duty, and laughed at the director.

About this time, in the beginning of 1824, the Jamaica Ginger Beer Company shut up shop—exploded, as Gus said, with a bang! The Patent Pump shares were down to 15*l.* upon a paid-up capital of 65*l.* Still ours were at a high premium; and the Independent West Diddlesex held its head up as proudly as any office in London. Round-hand's abuse had had some influence against the director, certainly; for he hinted at malversation of shares: but the Company still stood as united as the Hand-in-Hand, and as firm as the Rock.

To return to the state of affairs in Bernard Street, Russell Square: My aunt's old furniture crammed our little rooms; and my aunt's enormous old jingling grand piano, with crooked legs and half the strings broken, occupied three-fourths of the little drawing-room. Here used Mrs. H. to sit, and play us, for hours, sonatas that were in fashion in Lord Charleville's time; and sung with a cracked voice, till it was all that we could do to refrain from laughing.

And it was queer to remark the change that had taken place in Mrs. Hoggarty's character now: for whereas she was in the country among the topping persons of the village, and quite content with a tea-party at six, and a game of twopenny whist afterwards; in London she would never dine till seven; would have a fly from the mews, to drive in the Park twice a week; cut and uncut, and ripped up, and twisted over and over all her old gowns, flounces, caps, and fallals, and kept my poor Mary from morning till night altering them to the present mode. Mrs. Hoggarty, moreover, appeared in a new wig; and, I am sorry to say, turned out with such a pair of red cheeks as Nature never gave her; and as made all the people in Bernard Street stare, where they are not as yet used to such fashions.

Moreover, she insisted upon our establishing a servant in livery,—a boy, that is, of about sixteen.—who was dressed in one of the old liveries that she had brought with her from Somersetshire, decorated with new cuffs and collars, and new buttons; on the latter were represented the united

crests of the Titmarshes and Hoggarties, viz. a tomtit rampant and a hog in armour. I thought this livery and crest-button rather absurd, I must confess, though my family *is* very ancient. And, Heavens! what a roar of laughter was raised in the office one day, when the little servant in the big livery, with the immense cane, walked in and brought me a message from Mrs. Hoggarty of Castle Hoggarty! Furthermore, all letters were delivered on a silver tray. If we had had a baby, I believe aunt would have had it down on the tray; but there was as yet no foundation for Mr. Smithers's insinuation upon that score, any more than for his other cowardly fabrication before narrated. Aunt and Mary used to walk gravely up and down the New Road, with the boy following with his great gold-headed stick; but though there was all this ceremony and parade, and aunt still talked of her acquaintances, we did not see a single person from week's end to week's end, and a more dismal house than ours could hardly be found in London town.

On Sundays, Mrs. Hoggarty used to go to St. Pancras Church, then just built, and as handsome as Covent Garden Theatre; and of evenings, to a meeting-house of the Anabaptists: and *that* day, at least, Mary and I had to ourselves,—for we chose to have seats at the Foundling, and heard the charming music there, and my wife used to look wistfully in the pretty children's faces,—and so, for the matter of that, did I. It was not, however, till a year after our marriage that she spoke in a way which shall be here passed over, but which filled both her and me with inexpressible joy.

I remember she had the news to give me on the very day when the Muff and Tippet Company shut up, after swallowing a capital of 300,000*l.* as some said, and nothing to show for it except a treaty with some Indians, who had afterwards tomahawked the agent of the Company. Some people said there were no Indians, and no agent to be tomahawked at all; but that the whole had been invented in a house in Crutched Friars. Well, I pitied poor Tidd, whose 20,000*l.* were thus gone in a year, and whom I met in the City that day with a most ghastly face. He had 1,000*l.* of debts, he said, and talked of shooting himself; but he was only arrested, and passed a long time in the Fleet. Mary's delightful news, however, soon put Tidd

and the Muff and Tippet Company out of my head, as you may fancy.

Other circumstances now occurred in the city of London which seemed to show that our director was—what is not to be found in Johnson's Dictionary—rather shaky. Three of his companies had broken; four more were in a notoriously insolvent state; and even at the meetings of the directors of the West Diddlesex, some stormy words passed, which ended in the retirement of several of the board. Friends of Mr. B.'s filled up their places: Mr. Puppet, Mr. Straw, Mr. Query, and other respectable gents, coming forward and joining the concern. Brough and Hoff dissolved partnership; and Mr. B. said he had quite enough to do to manage the I. W. D., and intended gradually to retire from the other affairs. Indeed, such an association as ours was enough work for any man, let alone the parliamentary duties which Brough was called on to perform, and the seventy-two lawsuits which burst upon him as principal director of the late companies.

Perhaps I should here describe the desperate attempts made by Mrs. Hoggarty to introduce herself into genteel life. Strange to say, although we had my Lord Tiptoff's word to the contrary, she insisted upon it that she and Lady Drum were intimately related; and no sooner did she read in the *Morning Post* of the arrival of her ladyship and her granddaughters in London, than she ordered the fly before mentioned, and left cards at their respective houses. Her card, that is—'MRS. HOGGARTY OF CASTLE HOGGARTY,' magnificently engraved in Gothic letters and flourishes; and ours, viz.—'Mr. and Mrs. S. Titmarsh,' which she had printed for the purpose.

She would have stormed Lady Jane Preston's door, and forced her way upstairs in spite of Mary's entreaties to the contrary, had the footman who received her card given her the least encouragement; but that functionary, no doubt struck by the oddity of her appearance, placed himself in the front of the door, and declared that he had positive orders not to admit any strangers to his lady. On which Mrs. Hoggarty clenched her fist out of the coach-window, and promised that she would have him turned away.

Yellowplush only burst out laughing at this; and though aunt wrote a most indignant letter to Mr. Edmund Preston,

complaining of the insolence of the servants of that right honourable gent, Mr. Preston did not take any notice of her letter, further than to return it, with a desire that he might not be troubled with such impertinent visits for the future. A pretty day we had of it when this letter arrived, owing to my aunt's disappointment and rage in reading the contents; for when Solomon brought up the note on the silver tea-tray as usual, my aunt seeing Mr. Preston's seal and name at the corner of the letter (which is the common way of writing adopted by those official gents)—my aunt, I say, seeing his name and seal, cried, '*Now*, Mary, who is right?' and betted my wife a sixpence that the envelope contained an invitation to dinner. She never paid the sixpence though she lost, but contented herself by abusing Mary all day, and said I was a poor-spirited sneak for not instantly horsewhipping Mr. P. A pretty joke, indeed! They would have hanged me in those days, as they did the man who shot Mr. Perceval.

And now I should be glad to enlarge upon that experience in genteel life, which I obtained through the perseverance of Mrs. Hoggarty; but it must be owned that my opportunities were but few, lasting only for the brief period of six months; and also, genteel society has been fully described already by various authors of novels, whose names need not here be set down, but who, being themselves connected with the aristocracy—viz. as members of noble families, or as footmen or hangers-on thereof, naturally understand their subject a great deal better than a poor young fellow from a fire-office can.

There was our celebrated adventure in the Opera House, whither Mrs. H. would insist upon conducting us; and where, in a room of the establishment called the crush-room, where the ladies and gents after the music and dancing await the arrival of their carriages (a pretty figure did our little Solomon cut, by the way, with his big cane, among the gentlemen of the shoulder-knot assembled in the lobby!)—when, I say, in the crush-room, Mrs. H. rushed up to old Lady Drum, whom I pointed out to her, and insisted upon claiming relationship with her ladyship. But my Lady Drum had only a memory when she chose, as I may say, and had entirely on this occasion thought fit to forget her connexion with the Titmarshes and Hoggarties. Far from recognizing us, indeed, she called

Mrs. Hoggarty an 'ojus 'oman,' and screamed out as loud as possible for a police-officer.

This and other rebuffs made my aunt perceive the vanities of this wicked world, as she said, and threw her more and more into really serious society. She formed several very valuable acquaintances, she said, at the Independent Chapel; and among others, lighted upon her friend of the Rookery, Mr. Grimes Wapshot. We did not know then the interview which he had had with Mr. Smithers, nor did Grimes think proper to acquaint us with the particulars of it; but though I did acquaint Mrs. H. with the fact, that her favourite preacher had been tried for forgery, *she* replied, that she considered the story an atrocious calumny; and *he* answered by saying that Mary and I were in lamentable darkness, and that we should infallibly find the way to a certain bottomless pit, of which he seemed to know a great deal. Under the reverend gentleman's guidance and advice, she, after a time, separated from St. Pancras altogether—'*sat under him,*' as the phrase is, regularly thrice a week—began to labour in the conversion of the poor of Bloomsbury and St. Giles's, and made a deal of baby-linen for distribution among those benighted people. She did not make any, however, for Mrs. Sam Titmarsh, who now showed signs that such would be speedily necessary, but let Mary (and my mother and sisters in Somersetshire) provide what was requisite for the coming event. I am not, indeed, sure that she did not say it was wrong on our parts to make any such provision, and that we ought to let the morrow provide for itself. At any rate, the Rev. Grimes Wapshot drank a deal of brandy-and-water at our house, and dined there even oftener than poor Gus used to do.

But I had little leisure to attend to him and his doings; for I must confess at this time I was growing very embarrassed in my circumstances, and was much harassed both as a private and public character.

As regards the former, Mrs. Hoggarty had given me 50*l.*; but out of that 50*l.* I had to pay a journey post from Somersetshire, all the carriage of her goods from the country, the painting, papering, and carpeting of my house, the brandy and strong liquors drunk by the Rev. Grimes and his friends (for the reverend gent said that Rosolio did not agree with him); and finally, a thousand

small bills and expenses incident to all housekeepers in the town of London.

Add to this, I received just at the time when I was most in want of cash, Madame Mantalini's bill, Messrs. Howell and James's ditto, the account of Baron von Stiltz, and the bill of Mr. Polonius for the setting of the diamond-pin. All these bills arrived in a week, as they have a knack of doing; and fancy my astonishment in presenting them to Mrs. Hoggarty, when she said, 'Well, my dear, you are in the receipt of a very fine income. If you choose to order dresses and jewels from first-rate shops, you must pay for them; and don't expect that *I* am to abet your extravagance, or give you a shilling more than the munificent sum I pay you for board and lodging!'

How could I tell Mary of this behaviour of Mrs. Hoggarty, and Mary in such a delicate condition? And bad as matters were at home, I am sorry to say at the office they began to look still worse.

Not only did Roundhand leave, but Highmore went away. Abednego became head clerk: and one day old Abednego came to the place, and was shown into the directors' private room; when he left it, he came trembling, chattering, and cursing downstairs; and had begun, 'Shentlemen——' a speech to the very clerks in the office; when Mr. Brough, with an imploring look, and crying out, 'Stop till Saturday!' at length got him into the street.

On Saturday, Abednego junior left the office for ever, and I became head clerk with 400*l.* a year salary. It was a fatal week for the office, too. On Monday when I arrived and took my seat at the head desk, and my first read of the newspaper, as was my right, the first thing I read was, 'Frightful fire in Houndsditch! Total destruction of Mr. Meshach's sealing-wax manufactory, and of Mr. Shadrach's adjoining clothing dépôt. In the former was 20,000*l.* worth of the finest Dutch wax, which the voracious element attacked and devoured in a twinkling. The latter estimable gentleman had just completed 40,000 suits of clothes for the cavalry of H.H. the Cacique of Poyâis.'

Both of these Jewish gents, who were connexions of Mr. Abednego, were insured in our office to the full amount of their loss. The calamity was attributed to the drunkenness of a scoundrelly Irish watchman, who was employed on the premises, and who upset a bottle of whisky in the

warehouse of Messrs. Shadrach, and incautiously looked for the liquor with a lighted candle. The man was brought to our office by his employers; and certainly, as we all could testify, was *even then* in a state of frightful intoxication.

As if this were not sufficient, in the obituary was announced the demise of Alderman Pash—Alderman Cally-Pash we used to call him in our lighter hours, knowing his propensity to green fat; but such a moment as this was no time for joking! He was insured by our house for 5,000*l.* And now I saw very well the truth of a remark of Gus's—viz., that life-insurance companies go on excellently for a year or two after their establishment, but that it is much more difficult to make them profitable when the assured parties begin to die.

The Jewish fires were the heaviest blows we had had; for though the Waddingley Cotton-mills had been burnt in 1822, at a loss to the Company of 80,000*l.*, and though the Patent Erostratus Match Manufactory had exploded in the same year at a charge of 14,000*l.*, there were those who said that the loss had not been near so heavy as was supposed—nay, that the Company had burnt the above-named establishments as advertisements for themselves. Of these facts I can't be positive, having never seen the early accounts of the concern.

Contrary to the expectation of all us gents, who were ourselves as dismal as mutes, Mr. Brough came to the office in his coach-and-four, laughing and joking with a friend as he stepped out at the door.

'Gentlemen!' said he, 'you have read the papers; they announce an event which I most deeply deplore. I mean the demise of the excellent Alderman Pash, one of our constituents. But if anything can console me for the loss of that worthy man, it is to think that his children and widow will receive, at eleven o'clock next Saturday, 5,000*l.* from my friend, Mr. Titmarsh, who is now head clerk here. As for the accident which has happened to Messrs. Shadrach and Meshach,—in *that*, at least, there is nothing that can occasion any person sorrow. On Saturday next, or as soon as the particulars of their loss can be satisfactorily ascertained, my friend, Mr. Titmarsh, will pay to them across the counter a sum of forty, fifty, eighty, one hundred thousand pounds—according to the amount of their loss. *They*, at least, will be remunerated; and though to our

proprietors the outlay will no doubt be considerable, yet we can afford it, gentlemen. John Brough can afford it himself, for the matter of that, and not be very much embarrassed; and we must learn to bear ill fortune as we have hitherto borne good, and show ourselves to be men always!

Mr. B. concluded with some allusions, which I confess I don't like to give here; for to speak of Heaven in connexion with common worldly matters, has always appeared to me irreverent; and to bring it to bear witness to the lie in his mouth, as a religious hypocrite does, is such a frightful crime, that one should be careful even in alluding to it.

Mr. Brough's speech somehow found its way into the newspapers of that very evening; nor can I think who gave a report of it, for none of our gents left the office that day until the evening papers had appeared. But there was the speech—aye, and at the week's end, although Roundhand was heard on 'Change that day declaring he would bet five to one that Alderman Pash's money would never be paid,—at the week's end, the money was paid by me to Mrs. Pash's solicitor across the counter, and no doubt Roundhand lost his money.

Shall I tell how the money was procured? There can be no harm in mentioning the matter now after twenty years' lapse of time; and, moreover, it is greatly to the credit of two individuals now dead.

As I was head clerk, I had occasion to be frequently in Brough's room, and he now seemed once more disposed to take me into his confidence.

'Titmarsh, my boy,' said he one day to me, after looking me hard in the face, 'did you ever hear of the fate of the great Mr. Silberschmidt of London?' Of course I had. Mr. Silberschmidt, the Rothschild of his day (indeed I have heard the latter famous gent was originally a clerk in Silberschmidt's house)—Silberschmidt, fancying he could not meet his engagements, committed suicide; and had he lived till four o'clock that day, would have known that he was worth 400,000*l*. 'To tell you frankly the truth,' says Mr. B., 'I am in Silberschmidt's case. My late partner, Hoff, has given bills in the name of the firm to an enormous amount, and I have been obliged to meet them. I have been cast in fourteen actions, brought by creditors of that infernal Ginger Beer Company; and all the debts

are put upon my shoulders, on account of my known wealth. Now, unless I have time, I cannot pay ; and the long and short of the matter is, that if I cannot procure 5,000*l.* before Saturday, *our concern is ruined !*

‘What ! the West Diddlesex ruined ?’ says I, thinking of my poor mother’s annuity. ‘Impossible ! our business is splendid !’

‘We must have 5,000*l.* on Saturday, and we are saved ; and if you will, as you can, get it for me, I will give you 10,000*l.* for the money !’

B. then showed me to a fraction the accounts of the concern, and his own private account ; proving beyond the possibility of a doubt, that with the 5,000*l.* our office must be set a-going ; and without it, that the concern must stop. No matter how he proved the thing ; but there is, you know, a *dictum* of a statesman, that give him but leave to use figures, and he will prove anything.

I promised to ask Mrs. Hoggarty once more for the money, and she seemed not to be disinclined. I told him so ; and that day he called upon her, his wife called upon her, his daughter called upon her, and once more the Brough carriage-and-four was seen at our house.

But Mrs. Brough was a bad manager ; and instead of carrying matters with a high hand, fairly burst into tears before Mrs. Hoggarty, and went down on her knees and besought her to save dear John. This at once aroused my aunt’s suspicions ; and instead of lending the money, she wrote off to Mr. Smithers instantly to come up to her, desired me to give her up the 3,000*l.* scrip shares that I possessed, called me an atrocious cheat and heartless swindler, and vowed I had been the cause of her ruin.

How was Mr. Brough to get the money ? I will tell you. Being in his room one day, old Gates, the Fulham porter, came and brought him from Mr. Balls, the pawnbroker, a sum of 1,200*l.* Missus told him, he said, to carry the plate to Mr. Balls ; and having paid the money, old Gates fumbled a great deal in his pockets, and at last pulled out a 5*l.* note, which he said his daughter Jane had just sent him from service, and begged Mr. B. would let him have another share in the Company. ‘He was mortal sure it would go right yet. And when he heard master crying and cursing as he and missus were walking in the shrubbery, and saying that for the want of a few pounds—a few shillings—the finest

fortune in Europe was to be overthrown, why Gates and his woman thought that they should come for'ard, to be sure, with all they could, to help the kindest master and missus ever was.'

This was the substance of Gates's speech; and Mr. Brough shook his hand and—took the 5*l.* 'Gates,' said he, 'that 5*l.* note shall be the best outlay you ever made in your life!' and I have no doubt it was,—but it was in Heaven that poor old Gates was to get the interest of his little mite.

Nor was this the only instance. Mrs. Brough's sister, Miss Dough, who had been on bad terms with the director almost ever since he had risen to be a great man, came to the office with a power of attorney, and said, 'John, Isabella has been with me this morning, and says you want money, and I have brought you my 4,000*l.*; it is all I have, John, and pray God it may do you good—you and my dear sister, who was the best sister in the world to me—till—till a little time ago.'

And she laid down the paper, and I was called up to witness it; and Brough, with tears in his eyes, told me her words; for he could trust me, he said. And thus it was that I came to be present at Gates's interview with his master, which took place only an hour afterwards. Brave Mrs. Brough! how she was working for her husband! Good woman, and kind! but *you* had a true heart, and merited a better fate! Though wherefore say so? The woman, to this day, thinks her husband an angel, and loves him a thousand times better for his misfortunes.

On Saturday, Alderman Pash's solicitor was paid by me across the counter, as I said. 'Never mind your aunt's money, Titmarsh, my boy,' said Brough: 'never mind her having resumed her shares; you are a true honest fellow; you have never abused me like that pack of curs downstairs, and I'll make your fortune yet!'

The next week as I was sitting with my wife, with Mr. Smithers, and with Mrs. Hoggarty, taking our tea comfortably, a knock was heard at the door, and a gentleman desired to speak to me in the parlour. It was Mr. Aminadab of Chancery Lane, who arrested me as a shareholder of the Independent West Diddlesex Association, at the suit of Von Stiltz of Clifford Street, tailor and draper.

I called down Smithers, and told him for Heaven's sake not to tell Mary.

'Where is Brough?' says Mr. Smithers.

'Why,' says Mr. Aminadab, 'he's once more of the firm of Brough and Off, sir—he breakfasted at Calais this morning!'

CHAPTER XI

IN WHICH IT APPEARS THAT A MAN MAY POSSESS A DIAMOND
AND YET BE VERY HARD PRESSED FOR A DINNER

ON that fatal Saturday evening, in a hackney-coach, fetched from the Foundling, was I taken from my comfortable house and my dear little wife, whom Mr. Smithers was left to console as he might. He said that I was compelled to take a journey upon business connected with the office; and my poor Mary made up a little portmanteau of clothes, and tied a comforter round my neck, and bade my companion particularly to keep the coach-windows shut, which injunction the grinning wretch promised to obey. Our journey was not long; it was only a shilling fare to Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane, and there I was set down.

The house before which the coach stopped seemed to be only one of half a dozen in that street which were used for the same purpose. No man, be he ever so rich, can pass by those dismal houses, I think, without a shudder. The front windows are barred, and on the dingy pillar of the door was a shining brass plate, setting forth that 'Aminadab, Officer to the Sheriff of Middlesex,' lived therein. A little red-haired Israelite opened the first door as our coach drove up, and received me and my baggage.

As soon as we entered the door, he barred it, and I found myself in the face of another huge door, which was strongly locked; and, at last, passing through that, we entered the lobby of the house.

There is no need to describe it. It is very like ten thousand other houses in our dark city of London. There was a dirty passage and a dirty stair, and from the passage two dirty doors let into two filthy rooms, which had strong bars at the windows, and yet withal an air of horrible finery that makes me uncomfortable to think of even yet. On the

walls hung all sorts of trumpery pictures in tawdry frames (how different from those capital performances of my cousin Michael Angelo !) ; on the mantelpiece, huge French clocks, vases, and candlesticks ; on the sideboards, enormous trays of Birmingham plated-ware ; for Mr. Aminadab not only arrested those who could not pay money, but lent it to those who could ; and had already, in the way of trade, sold and bought these articles many times over.

I agreed to take the back-parlour for the night, and while a Hebrew damsel was arranging a little dusky sofa-bedstead (woe betide him who has to sleep on it !) I was invited into the front parlour, where Mr. Aminadab, bidding me take heart, told me I should have a dinner for nothing with a party who had just arrived. I did not want for dinner, but I was glad not to be alone—not alone, even till Gus came, for whom I dispatched a messenger to his lodgings hard by.

I found there, in the front parlour, at eight o'clock in the evening, four gentlemen, just about to sit down to dinner. Surprising ! there was Mr. B., a gentleman of fashion, who had only within half an hour arrived in a post-chaise, with his companion Mr. Lock, an officer of Horsham jail. Mr. B. was arrested in this wise :—He was a careless, good-humoured gentleman, and had endorsed bills to a large amount for a friend, who, a man of high family and unquestionable honour, had pledged the latter, along with a number of the most solemn oaths, for the payment of the bills in question. Having endorsed the notes, young Mr. B., with a proper thoughtlessness, forgot all about them, and so, by some chance, did the friend whom he obliged ; for, instead of being in London with the money for the payment of his obligations, this latter gentleman was travelling abroad, and never hinted one word to Mr. B. that the notes would fall upon him. The young gentleman was at Brighton lying sick of a fever ; was taken from his bed by a bailiff, and carried, on a rainy day, to Horsham jail ; had a relapse of his complaint, and when sufficiently recovered, was brought up to London to the house of Mr. Aminadab, where I found him—a pale, thin, good-humoured, *lost* young man ; he was lying on a sofa, and had given orders for the dinner to which I was invited. The lad's face gave one pain to look at ; it was impossible not to see that his hours were numbered.

Now Mr. B. has not anything to do with my humble

story ; but I can't help mentioning him as I saw him. He sent for his lawyer and his doctor ; the former settled speedily his accounts with the bailiff, and the latter arranged all his earthly accounts ; for after he went from the spunging-house he never recovered from the shock of the arrest, and in a few weeks he *died*. And though this circumstance took place many years ago, I can't forget it to my dying day, and often see the author of Mr. B.'s death,—a prosperous gentleman, riding a fine horse in the Park, lounging at the window of a club with many friends, no doubt, and a good reputation. I wonder whether the man sleeps easily and eats with a good appetite ? I wonder whether he has paid Mr. B.'s heirs the sum which that gentleman paid and *died for* ?

If Mr. B.'s history has nothing to do with mine, and is only inserted here for the sake of a moral, what business have I to mention particulars of the dinner to which I was treated by that gentleman, in the spunging-house in Cursitor Street ? Why, for the moral too ; and therefore, the public must be told of what really and truly that dinner consisted.

There were five guests, and three silver tureens of soup : viz. mock-turtle soup, ox-tail soup, and giblet-soup. Next came a great piece of salmon, likewise on a silver dish, a roast goose, a roast saddle of mutton, roast game, and all sorts of adjuncts. In this way can a gentleman live in a spunging-house if he be inclined, and over this repast (which, in truth, I could not touch, for, let alone having dined, my heart was full of care)—over this meal my friend Gus Hoskins found me, when he received the letter that I had dispatched to him.

Gus, who had never been in a prison before, and whose heart failed him as the red-headed young Moses opened and shut for him the numerous iron outer doors, was struck dumb to see me behind a bottle of claret, in a room blazing with gilt lamps ; the curtains were down too, and you could not see the bars at the windows ; and Mr. B., Mr. Lock the Brighton officer, Mr. Aminadab, and another rich gentleman of his trade and religious persuasion, were chirping as merrily and looked as respectably as any noblemen in the land.

'Have him in,' said Mr. B., 'if he's a friend of Mr. Titmarsh's ; for, cuss me, I like to see a rogue : and run me through, Titmarsh, but I think you are one of the best in

London. You beat Brough; you do, by Jove! for he looks like a rogue—anybody would swear to him: but you! by Jove, you look the very picture of honesty!’

‘A deep file,’ said Aminadab, winking and pointing me out to his friend Mr. Jehoshaphat.

‘A good one,’ says Jehoshaphat.

‘In for three hundred thousand pound,’ says Aminadab; ‘Brough’s right-hand man, and only three-and-twenty.’

‘Mr. Titmarsh, sir, your ‘ealth, sir,’ says Mr. Lock, in an ecstacy of admiration. ‘Your very good ‘ealth, sir, and better luck to you next time.’

‘Pooh, pooh! *he’s* all right,’ says Aminadab; ‘let *him* alone.’

‘In for *what*?’ shouted I, quite amazed. ‘Why, sir, you arrested me for 90%.’

‘Yes, but you are in for half a million,—you know you are. *Them* debts I don’t count—them paltry tradesmen’s accounts. I mean Brough’s business. It’s an ugly one; but you’ll get through it. We all know you; and I lay my life that when you come through the court, Mrs. Titmarsh has got a handsome thing laid by.’

‘Mrs. Titmarsh has a small property, sir,’ says I. ‘What then?’

The three gentlemen burst into a loud laugh, said I was a ‘rum chap’—a ‘downy cove,’ and made other remarks which I could not understand then; but the meaning of which I have since comprehended, for they took me to be a great rascal, I am sorry to say, and supposed that I had robbed the I. W. D. Association, and, in order to make my money secure, settled it on my wife.

It was in the midst of this conversation that, as I said, Gus came in; and whew! when he saw what was going on, he gave *such* a whistle!

‘Herr von Joel, by Jove!’ says Aminadab. At which all laughed.

‘Sit down,’ says Mr. B.,—‘sit down, and wet your whistle, my piper! I say, egad! you’re the piper that played before Moses! Had you tlfere, Dab. Dab, get a fresh bottle of Burgundy for Mr. Hoskins.’ And before he knew where he was, there was Gus for the first time in his life drinking Clos Vougeot. Gus said he had never tasted Bergamy before, at which the bailiff sneered, and told him the name of the wine.

'*Old Clo!* What?' says Gus; and we laughed, but the Hebrew gents did not this time.

'Come, come, sir!' says Mr. Aminadab's friend, 'we're all shentlemen here, and shentlemen never makish reflexunsh upon other shentlemen'sh pershuashunsh.'

After this feast was concluded, Gus and I retired to my room to consult about my affairs. With regard to the responsibility incurred as a shareholder in the West Diddlesex, I was not uneasy; for though the matter might cause me a little trouble at first, I knew I was not a shareholder; that the shares were scrip shares, making the dividend payable to the bearer; and my aunt had called back her shares, and consequently I was free. But it was very unpleasant to me to consider that I was in debt nearly a hundred pounds to tradesmen, chiefly of Mrs. Hoggarty's recommendation; and as she had promised to be answerable for their bills, I determined to send her a letter, reminding her of her promise, and begging her at the same time to relieve me from Mr. von Stiltz's debt, for which I was arrested, and which was incurred not certainly at her desire, but at Mr. Brough's; and would never have been incurred by me but at the absolute demand of that gentleman.

I wrote to her, therefore, begging her to pay all these debts, and promised myself on Monday morning again to be with my dear wife. Gus carried off the letter, and promised to deliver it in Bernard Street after church-time, taking care that Mary should know nothing at all of the painful situation in which I was placed. It was near midnight when we parted, and I tried to sleep as well as I could in the dirty little sofa-bedstead of Mr. Aminadab's back-parlour.

That morning was fine and sunshiny, and I heard all the bells ringing cheerfully for church, and longed to be walking to the Foundling with my wife; but there were the three iron doors between me and liberty, and I had nothing for it but to read my prayers in my own room, and walk up and down afterwards in the court at the back of the house. Would you believe it? This very court was like a cage! Great iron bars covered it in from one end to another; and here it was that Mr. Aminadab's jailbirds took the air.

They had seen me reading out of the prayer-book at the back-parlour window, and all burst into a yell of laughter when I came to walk in the cage. One of them shouted out

'Amen!' when I appeared; another called me a muff (which means, in the slang language, a very silly fellow); a third wondered that I took to my prayer-book *yet*.

'When do you mean, sir?' says I to the fellow—a rough man, a horse-dealer.

'Why, when you are going *to be hanged*, you young hypocrite!' says the man. 'But that is always the way with Brough's people,' continued he. 'I had four greys once for him—a great bargain, but he would not go to look at them at Tattersall's, nor speak a word of business about them, because it was a Sunday.'

'Because there are hypocrites, sir,' says I, 'religion is not to be considered a bad thing; and if Mr. Brough would not deal with you on a Sunday, he certainly did his duty.'

The men only laughed the more at this rebuke, and evidently considered me a great criminal. I was glad to be released from their society, by the appearance of Gus and Mr. Smithers. Both wore very long faces. They were ushered into my room, and, without any orders of mine, a bottle of wine and biscuits were brought in by Mr. Aminadab, which I really thought was very kind of him.

'Drink a glass of wine, Mr. Titmarsh,' says Smithers, 'and read this letter. A pretty note was that which you sent to your aunt this morning, and here you have an answer to it.'

I drank the wine, and trembled rather as I read as follows:—

SIR,

If, because you knew I had desined to leave you my property, you wished to murdar me, and so stepp into it, you are dissapointed. Your *villiany* and *ingratatude* would have murdard me, had I not, by Heaven's grace, been inabled to look for consalation *elsewhere*.

For nearly a year I have been a *martar* to you. I gave up every-thing,—my happy home in the country, where all respected the name of Hoggarty; my valuble furnitur and wines; my plate, glass, and crockry; I brought all—all to make your home happy and respectable. I put up with the *airs and impertanencies* of Mrs. Titmarsh; I loaded her and you with presents and bennafits. I sacrafised myself; I gave up the best sociaty in the land, to witch I have been accustomed, in order to be a gardian and compannion to you, and prevent, if possable, that *waist and ixtravygance* which I *prophycied* would be your ruin. Such waist and ixtravygance never, never, never did I see. Buttar waisted as if it had been dirt, coles flung away, candles burnt *at both ends*, tea and meat the

same. The butcher's bill in this house was enough to support six families.

And now you have the audacity, being placed in prison justly for your crimes,—for cheating me of 3,000*l.*, for robbing your mother of an insignificant sum, which to her, poor thing, was everything (though she will not feel her loss as I do, being all her life next door to a beggar), for incurring debts which you cannot pay, wherein you knew that your miserable income was quite unable to support your extravagance—you come upon me to pay your debts! No, sir, it is quite enough that your mother should go on the parish, and that your wife should sweep the streets, to which you have indeed brought them; I, at least, though cheated by you of a large sum, and obliged to pass my days in comparative ruin, can retire, and have some of the comforts to which my rank entitles me. The furniture in this house is mine; and as I presume you intend *your lady* to sleep in the streets, I give you warning that I shall remove it all to-morrow.

Mr. Smithers will tell you that I had intended to leave you my entire fortune. I have this morning, in his presents, solemnly torn up my will; and hereby renounce all connexion with you and your beggarly family.

SUSAN HOGGARTY.

PS. I took a viper into my bosom, and it stung me.

I confess that, on the first reading of this letter, I was in such a fury that I forgot almost the painful situation in which it plunged me, and the ruin hanging over me.

'What a fool you were, Titmarsh, to write that letter!' said Mr. Smithers. 'You have cut your own throat, sir,—lost a fine property,—written yourself out of five hundred a year. Mrs. Hoggarty, my client, brought the will, as she says, downstairs, and flung it into the fire before our faces.'

'It's a blessing that your wife was from home,' added Gus. 'She went to church this morning with Dr. Salt's family, and sent word that she would spend the day with them. She was always glad to be away from Mrs. H., you know.'

'She never knew on which side her bread was buttered,' said Mr. Smithers. 'You should have taken the lady when she was in the humour, sir, and have borrowed the money elsewhere. Why, sir, I had almost reconciled her to her loss in that cursed Company. I showed her how I had saved out of Brough's claws the whole of her remaining fortune, which he would have devoured in a day, the scoundrel! And if you would have left the matter to me, Mr. Titmarsh, I would have had you reconciled completely to Mrs.

Hoggarty ; I would have removed all your difficulties ; I would have lent you the pitiful sum of money myself.'

'Will you ?' says Gus ; 'that's a trump !' and he seized Smithers's hand, and squeezed it so that the tears came into the attorney's eyes.

'Generous fellow !' said I ; 'lend me money, when you know in what a situation I am in, and not able to pay !'

'Aye, my good sir, there's the rub !' says Mr. Smithers. 'I said I *would* have lent the money ; and so to the acknowledged heir of Mrs. Hoggarty I would—would at this moment ; for nothing delights the heart of Bob Smithers more than to do a kindness. I would have rejoiced in doing it ; and a mere acknowledgement from that respected lady would have amply sufficed. But now, sir, the case is altered,—you have no security to offer, as you justly observe.'

'Not a whit, certainly.'

'And without security, sir, of course can expect no money—of course not. You are a man of the world, Mr. Titmarsh, and I see our notions exactly agree.'

'There's his wife's property,' says Gus.

'Wife's property ? Bah ! Mrs. Sam Titmarsh is a minor, and can't touch a shilling of it. No, no, no meddling with minors for me ! But stop !—your mother has a house and shop in our village. Get me a mortgage of that—'

'I'll do no such thing, sir,' says I. 'My mother has suffered quite enough on my score already, and has my sisters to provide for ; and I will thank you, Mr. Smithers, not to breathe a syllable to her regarding my present situation.'

'You speak like a man of honour, sir,' says Mr. Smithers, 'and I will obey your injunctions to the letter. I will do more, sir. I will introduce you to a respectable firm here, my worthy friends, Messrs. Higgs, Biggs, and Blatherwick, who will do everything in their power to serve you. And so, sir, I wish you a very good morning.'

And with this Mr. Smithers took his hat and left the room ; and after a further consultation with my aunt, as I heard afterwards, quitted London that evening by the mail.

I sent my faithful Gus off once more to break the matter gently to my wife, fearing lest Mrs. Hoggarty should speak of it abruptly to her, as I knew in her anger she would

do. But he came in an hour panting back, to say that Mrs. H. had packed and locked her trunks, and had gone off in a hackney-coach. So, knowing that my poor Mary was not to return till night, Hoskins remained with me till then ; and, after a dismal day, left me once more at nine, to carry the dismal tidings to her.

At ten o'clock on that night there was a great rattling and ringing at the outer door, and presently my poor girl fell into my arms ; and Gus Hoskins sat blubbering in a corner, as I tried my best to console her.

The next morning I was favoured with a visit from Mr. Blatherwick, who, hearing from me that I had only three guineas in my pocket, told me very plainly that lawyers only lived by fees. He recommended me to quit Cursitor Street, as living there was very expensive. And as I was sitting very sad, my wife made her appearance (it was with great difficulty that she could be brought to leave me the night previous),—

‘The horrible men came at four this morning,’ said she, ‘four hours before light.’

‘What horrible men ?’ says I.

‘Your aunt’s men,’ said she, ‘to remove the furniture ; they had it all packed before I came away. And I let them carry all,’ said she : ‘I was too sad to look what was ours and what was not. That odious Mr. Wapshot was with them ; and I left him seeing the last wagon-load from the door. I have only brought away your clothes,’ added she, ‘and a few of mine ; and some of the books you used to like to read, and some—some things I have been getting for the—for the baby. The servants’ wages were paid up to Christmas ; and I paid them the rest. And see ! just as I was going away, the post came, and brought to me my half-year’s income—35*l.*, dear Sam. Isn’t it a blessing ?’

‘Will you pay my bill, Mr. What-d’ye-call’em ?’ here cried Mr. Aminadab, flinging open the door (he had been consulting with Mr. Blatherwick, I suppose)—‘I want the room for a *gentleman*. I guess it’s too dear for the like of you.’ And here—will you believe it ?—the man handed me a bill of three guineas for two days’ board and lodging in his odious house.

There was a crowd of idlers round the door as I passed out of it ; and had I been alone I should have been ashamed of seeing them ; but, as it was, I was only thinking of my dear, dear wife, who was leaning trustfully on my arm, and smiling like heaven into my face—aye, and *took* heaven, too, into the Fleet Prison with me—or an angel out of heaven. Ah ! I had loved her before, and happy it is to love when one is hopeful and young in the midst of smiles and sunshine ; but be *unhappy*, and then see what it is to be loved by a good woman ! I declare before Heaven, that of all the joys and happy moments it has given me, that was the crowning one—that little ride, with my wife's cheek on my shoulder, down Holborn to the prison ! Do you think I cared for the bailiff that sat opposite ? No, by the Lord ! I kissed her, and hugged her—yes, and cried with her likewise. But before our ride was over her eyes dried up, and she stepped blushing and happy out of the coach at the prison-door, as if she were a princess going to the Queen's drawing-room.

CHAPTER XII

IN WHICH THE HERO'S AUNT'S DIAMOND MAKES ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE HERO'S UNCLE

THE failure of the great Diddlesex Association speedily became the theme of all the newspapers, and every person concerned in it was soon held up to public abhorrence as a rascal and a swindler. It was said that Brough had gone off with a million of money. Even it was hinted that poor I had sent a hundred thousand pounds to America, and only waited to pass through the court in order to be a rich man for the rest of my days. This opinion had some supporters in the prison, where, strange to say, it procured me consideration—of which, as may be supposed, I was little inclined to avail myself. Mr. Aminadab, however, in his frequent visits to the Fleet, persisted in saying that I was a poor-spirited creature, a mere tool in Brough's hands, and had not saved a shilling. Opinions, however, differed ; and I believe it was considered by the turnkeys that I was a fellow of exquisite dissimulation,

who had put on the appearance of poverty in order more effectually to mislead the public.

Messrs. Abednego and Son were similarly held up to public odium ; and, in fact, what were the exact dealings of these gentlemen with Mr. Brough I have never been able to learn. It was proved by the books that large sums of money had been paid to Mr. Abednego by the Company ; but he produced documents signed by Mr. Brough, which made the latter and the West Diddlesex Association his debtors to a still further amount. On the day I went to the Bankruptcy Court to be examined, Mr. Abednego and the two gentlemen from Houndsditch were present to swear to their debts, and made a sad noise, and uttered a vast number of oaths in attestation of their claim. But Messrs. Jackson and Paxton produced against them that very Irish porter who was said to have been the cause of the fire, and I am told hinted that they had matter for hanging the Jewish gents if they persisted in their demand. On this they disappeared altogether, and no more was ever heard of their losses. I am inclined to believe that our director had had money from Abednego—had given him shares as bonus and security—had been suddenly obliged to redeem these shares with ready money ; and so had precipitated the ruin of himself and the concern. It is needless to say here in what a multiplicity of companies Brough was engaged. That in which poor Mr. Tidd invested his money, did not pay 2*d.* in the pound ; and that was the largest dividend paid by any of them.

As for ours—ah ! there was a pretty scene as I was brought from the Fleet to the Bankruptcy Court, to give my testimony as late head clerk and accountant of the West Diddlesex Association.

My poor wife, then very near her time, insisted upon accompanying me to Basinghall Street ; and so did my friend Gus Hoskins, that true and honest fellow. If you had seen the crowd that was assembled, and the hubbub that was made as I was brought up !

‘Mr. Titmarsh,’ says the Commissioner as I came to the table, with a peculiar sarcastic accent on the Tit—‘Mr. Titmarsh, you were the confidant of Mr. Brough, the principal clerk of Mr. Brough, and a considerable shareholder in the Company ?’

‘Only a nominal one, sir,’ said I.

'Of course, only nominal,' continued the Commissioner, turning to his colleague with a sneer; 'and a great comfort it must be to you, sir, to think that you had a share in all the plun—the profits of the speculation, and now can free yourself from the losses, by saying you are only a nominal shareholder.'

'The infernal villain!' shouted out a voice from the crowd. It was that of the furious half-pay captain and late shareholder, Captain Sparr.

'Silence in the court there!' the Commissioner continued: and all this while Mary was anxiously looking in his face, and then in mine, as pale as death; while Gus, on the contrary, was as red as vermilion. 'Mr. Titmarsh, I have had the good fortune to see a list of your debts from the Insolvent Court, and find that you are indebted to Mr. Stiltz, the great tailor, in a handsome sum; to Mr. Polonius, the celebrated jeweller, likewise; to fashionable milliners and dressmakers, moreover;—and all this upon a salary of 200*l.* per annum. For so young a gentleman, it must be confessed you have employed your time well.'

'Has this anything to do with the question, sir?' says I. 'Am I here to give an account of my private debts, or to speak as to what I know regarding the affairs of the Company? As for my share in it, I have a mother, sir, and many sisters.'

'The d—d scoundrel!' shouts the captain.

'Silence that there fellow!' shouts Gus, as bold as brass; at which the court burst out laughing, and this gave me courage to proceed.

'My mother, sir, four years since, having a legacy of 400*l.* left to her, advised with her solicitor, Mr. Smithers, how she should dispose of this sum; and as the Independent West Diddlesex was just then established, the money was placed in an annuity in that office, where I procured a clerkship. You may suppose me a very hardened criminal, because I have ordered clothes of Mr. von Stiltz; but you will hardly fancy that I, a lad of nineteen, knew anything of the concerns of the Company into whose service I entered as twentieth clerk, my own mother's money paying, as it were, for my place. Well, sir, the interest offered by the Company was so tempting, that a rich relative of mine was induced to purchase a number of shares.'

‘Who induced your relative, if I may make so bold as to inquire?’

‘I can’t help owning, sir,’ says I, blushing, ‘that I wrote a letter myself. But consider, my relative was sixty years old, and I was twenty-one. My relative took several months to consider, and had the advice of her lawyers before she acceded to my request. And I made it at the instigation of Mr. Brough, who dictated the letter which I wrote, and who I really thought then was as rich as Mr. Rothschild himself.’

‘Your friend placed her money in your name; and you, if I mistake not, Mr. Titmarsh, were suddenly placed over the heads of twelve of your fellow-clerks as a reward for your service in obtaining it?’

‘It is very true, sir,—and, as I confessed it, poor Mary began to wipe her eyes, and Gus’s ears (I could not see his face) looked like two red-hot muffins—‘it’s quite true, sir; and, as matters have turned out, I am heartily sorry for what I did. But at the time I thought I could serve my aunt as well as myself; and you must remember, then, how high our shares were.’

‘Well, sir, having procured this sum of money, you were straightway taken into Mr. Brough’s confidence. You were received into his house, and from third clerk speedily became head clerk; in which post you were found at the disappearance of your worthy patron?’

‘Sir, you have no right to question me, to be sure; but here are a hundred of our shareholders, and I’m not unwilling to make a clean breast of it,’ said I, pressing Mary’s hand. ‘I certainly *was* the head clerk. And why? Because the other gents left the office. I certainly was received into Mr. Brough’s house. And why? Because, sir, *my aunt had more money to lay out*. I see it all clearly now, though I could not understand it then; and the proof that Mr. Brough wanted my aunt’s money, and not me, is that, when she came to town, our director carried her by force out of my house to Fulham, and never so much as thought of asking me or my wife thither. Aye, sir, and he would have had her remaining money, had not her lawyer from the country prevented her disposing of it. Before the concern finally broke, and as soon as she heard there was doubt concerning it, she took back her shares—scrip shares they were, sir, as you know—and has dis-

posed of them as she thought fit. Here, sir, and gents,' says I, 'you have the whole of the history as far as regards me. In order to get her only son a means of livelihood, my mother placed her little money with the Company—it is lost. My aunt invested larger sums with it, which were to have been mine one day, and they are lost too; and here am I, at the end of four years, a disgraced and ruined man. Is there any one present, however much he has suffered by the failure of the Company, that has had worse fortune through it than I?'

'Mr. Titmarsh,' says Mr. Commissioner, in a much more friendly way, and at the same time casting a glance at a newspaper reporter that was sitting hard by, 'your story is not likely to get into the newspapers; for, as you say, it is a private affair, which you had no need to speak of unless you thought proper, and may be considered as a confidential conversation between us and the other gentlemen here. But if it *could* be made public, it might do some good, and warn people, if they *will* be warned, against the folly of such enterprises as that in which you have been engaged. It is quite clear from your story, that you have been deceived as grossly as any one of the persons present. But look you, sir, if you had not been so eager after gain, I think you would not have allowed yourself to be deceived, and would have kept your relative's money, and inherited it, according to your story, one day or other. Directly people expect to make a large interest, their judgement seems to desert them; and because they wish for profit, they think they are sure of it, and disregard all warnings and all prudence. Besides the hundreds of honest families who have been ruined by merely placing confidence in this Association of yours, and who deserve the heartiest pity, there are hundreds more who have embarked in it, like yourself, not for investment, but for speculation; and these, upon my word, deserve the fate they have met with. As long as dividends are paid, no questions are asked; and Mr. Brough might have taken the money for his shareholders or the high road, and they would have pocketed it, and not been too curious. But what's the use of talking?' says Mr. Commissioner, in a passion: 'here is one rogue detected, and a thousand dupes made; and if another swindler starts to-morrow, there will be a thousand more of his victims round this

table a year hence ; and so, I suppose, to the end. And now let's go to business, gentlemen, and excuse this sermon.'

After giving an account of all I knew, which was very little, other gents who were employed in the concern were examined ; and I went back to prison, with my poor little wife on my arm. We had to pass through the crowd in the rooms, and my heart bled as I saw, amongst a score of others, poor Gates, Brough's porter, who had advanced every shilling to his master, and was now, with ten children, houseless and penniless in his old age. Captain Sparr was in this neighbourhood, but by no means so friendly disposed ; for while Gates touched his hat, as if I had been a lord, the little captain came forward threatening with his bamboo-cane, and swearing with great oaths that I was an accomplice of Brough. 'Curse you for a smooth-faced scoundrel !' says he. 'What business have you to ruin an English gentleman, as you have me ?' And again he advanced with his stick. But this time, officer as he was, Gus took him by the collar, and shoved him back, and said, 'Look at the lady, you brute, and hold your tongue !' And when he looked at my wife's situation, Captain Sparr became redder for shame than he had before been for anger. 'I'm sorry she's married to such a good-for-nothing,' muttered he, and fell back ; and my poor wife and I walked out of the court, and back to our dismal room in the prison.

It was a hard place for a gentle creature like her to be confined in ; and I longed to have some of my relatives with her when her time should come. But her grandmother could not leave the old lieutenant ; and my mother had written to say that, as Mrs. Hoggarty was with us, she was quite as well at home with her children. 'What a blessing it is for you, under your misfortunes,' continued the good soul, 'to have the generous purse of your aunt for succour !' Generous purse of my aunt, indeed ! Where could Mrs. Hoggarty be ? It was evident that she had not written to any of her friends in the country, nor gone thither, as she threatened.

But as my mother had already lost so much money through my unfortunate luck, and as she had enough to do with her little pittance to keep my sisters at home, and as, on hearing of my condition, she would infallibly have sold her last gown to bring me aid, Mary and I agreed

that we would not let her know what our real condition was—bad enough ! Heaven knows, and sad and cheerless. Old Lieutenant Smith had likewise nothing but his half-pay and his rheumatism ; so we were, in fact, quite friendless.

That period of my life, and that horrible prison, seem to me like recollections of some fever. What an awful place !—not for the sadness, strangely enough, as I thought, but for the gaiety of it ; for the long prison galleries were, I remember, full of life and a sort of grave bustle. All day and all night doors were clapping to and fro ; and you heard loud voices, oaths, footsteps, and laughter. Next door to our room was one where a man sold gin, under the name of *tape* ; and here, from morning till night, the people kept up a horrible revelry ; and sang—sad songs some of them,—but my dear little girl was, thank God ! unable to understand the most part of their ribaldry. She never used to go out till nightfall ; and all day she sat working at a little store of caps and dresses for the expected stranger—and not, she says to this day, unhappy. But the confinement sickened her who had been used to happy country air, and she grew daily paler and paler.

The Fives Court was opposite our window ; and here I used, very unwillingly at first, but afterwards, I do confess, with much eagerness, to take a couple of hours' daily sport. Ah ! it was a strange place. There was an aristocracy there as elsewhere,—amongst other gents, a son of my Lord Deuceace ; and many of the men in the prison were as eager to walk with him, and talked of his family as knowingly, as if they were Bond Street bucks. Poor Tidd, especially, was one of these. Of all his fortune he had nothing left but a dressing-case and a flowered dressing-gown ; and to these possessions he added a fine pair of moustaches, with which the poor creature strutted about ; and though cursing his ill fortune, was, I do believe, as happy whenever his friends brought him a guinea, as he had been during his brief career as a gentleman on town. I have seen sauntering dandies in watering-places ogling the women, watching eagerly for steamboats and stage-coaches as if their lives depended upon them, and strutting all day in jackets up and down the public walks. Well, there are such fellows in prisons, quite as dandified and foolish, only a little more shabby—dandies with dirty beards and holes at their elbows.

I did not go near what is called the poor side of the prison—I *dared* not, that was the fact. But our little stock of money was running low ; and my heart sickened to think what might be my dear wife's fate, and on what sort of a couch our child might be born. But Heaven spared me that pang,—Heaven, and my dear, good friend, Gus Hoskins.

The attorneys to whom Mr. Smithers recommended me, told me that I could get leave to live in the rules of the Fleet, could I procure sureties to the marshal of the prison for the amount of the detainer lodged against me ; but though I looked Mr. Blatherwick hard in the face, he never offered to give the bail for me, and I knew no housekeeper in London who would procure it. There was, however, one whom I did not know,—and that was old Mr. Hoskins, the leather-seller of Skinner Street, a kind, fat gentleman, who brought his fat wife to see Mrs. Titmarsh ; and though the lady gave herself rather patronizing airs (her husband being free of the Skinners' Company, and bidding fair to be alderman, nay, Lord Mayor of the first city in the world), she seemed heartily to sympathize with us ; and her husband stirred and bustled about until the requisite leave was obtained, and I was allowed comparative liberty.

As for lodgings, they were soon had. My old landlady, Mrs. Stokes, sent her Jemima to say, that her first floor was at our service ; and when we had taken possession of it, and I offered at the end of the week to pay her bill, the good soul, with tears in her eyes, told me that she did not want for money now, and that she knew I had enough to do with what I had. I did not refuse her kindness ; for, indeed, I had but five guineas left, and ought not by rights to have thought of such expensive apartments as hers : but my wife's time was very near, and I could not bear to think that she should want for any comfort in her lying-in.

That admirable woman, with whom the Misses Hoskins came every day to keep company—and very nice, kind ladies they are—recovered her health a good deal, now she was out of the odious prison, and was enabled to take exercise. How gaily did we pace up and down Bridge Street and Chatham Place, to be sure ! and yet, in truth, I was a beggar, and felt sometimes ashamed of being so happy.

With regard to the liabilities of the Company my mind was now made quite easy ; for the creditors could only come

upon our directors, and these it was rather difficult to find. Mr. Brough was across the water ; and I must say, to the credit of that gentleman, that while everybody thought he had run away with hundreds of thousands of pounds, he was in a garret at Boulogne, with scarce a shilling in his pocket, and his fortune to make afresh. Mrs. Brough, like a good, brave woman, remained faithful to him, and only left Fulham with the gown on her back ; and Miss Belinda, though grumbling and sadly out of temper, was no better off. For the other directors,—when they came to inquire at Edinburgh for Mr. Mull, W.S., it appeared there *was* a gentleman of that name, who had practised in Edinburgh with good reputation until 1800, since when he had retired to the Isle of Skye ; and on being applied to, knew no more of the West Diddlesex Association than Queen Anne did. General Sir Dionysius O'Halloran had abruptly quitted Dublin, and returned to the republic of Guatemala. Mr. Shirk went into the *Gazette*. Mr. Macraw, M.P. and king's counsel, had not a single guinea in the world but what he received for attending our board ; and the only man seizable was Mr. Manstraw, a wealthy navy contractor, as we understood, at Chatham. He turned out to be a small dealer in marine stores, and his whole stock in trade was not worth 10*l*. Mr. Abednego was the other director, and we have already seen what became of *him*.

'Why, as there is no danger from the West Diddlesex,' suggested Mr. Hoskins senior, 'should you not now endeavour to make an arrangement with your creditors ; and who can make a better bargain with them than pretty Mrs. Titmarsh here, whose sweet eyes would soften the hardest-hearted tailor or milliner that ever lived ?'

Accordingly, my dear girl, one bright day in February, shook me by the hand, and, bidding me be of good cheer, set off with Gus in a coach, to pay a visit to those persons. Little did I think a year before, that the daughter of the gallant Smith should ever be compelled to be a suppliant to tailors and haberdashers ; but *she*, Heaven bless her ! felt none of the shame which oppressed me, or *said* she felt none, and went away, nothing doubting, on her errand.

In the evening she came back, and my heart thumped to know the news. I saw it was bad by her face. For some time she did not speak, but looked as pale as death, and wept as she kissed me. 'You speak, Mr. Augustus,'

at last said she, sobbing; and so Gus told me the circumstances of that dismal day.

‘What do you think, Sam?’ says he; ‘that infernal aunt of yours, at whose command you had the things, has written to the tradesmen to say that you are a swindler and impostor; that you give out that *she* ordered the goods; that she is ready to drop down dead, and to take her Bible-oath she never did any such thing, and that they must look to you alone for payment. Not one of them would hear of letting you out; and as for Mantalini, the scoundrel was so insolent that I gave him a box on the ear, and would have half-killed him, only poor Mary—Mrs. Titmarsh, I mean—screamed and fainted; and I brought her away, and here she is, as ill as can be.’

That night, the indefatigable Gus was obliged to run post-haste for Doctor Salts, and next morning a little boy was born. I did not know whether to be sad or happy, as they showed me the little weakly thing; but Mary was the happiest woman, she declared, in the world, and forgot all her sorrows in nursing the poor baby; and went bravely through her time, and vowed that it was the loveliest child in the world; and that though Lady Tiptoff, whose confinement we read of as having taken place the same day, might have a silk bed and a fine house in Grosvenor Square, she never, never could have such a beautiful child as our dear little Gus; for after whom should we have named the boy, if not after our good, kind friend? We had a little party at the christening, and, I assure you, were very merry over our tea.

The mother, thank Heaven! was very well, and it did one’s heart good to see her in that attitude in which I think every woman, be she ever so plain, looks beautiful—with her baby at her bosom. The child was sickly, but she did not see it; we were very poor, but what cared she? She had no leisure to be sorrowful as I was: I had my last guinea now in my pocket; and when *that* was gone—ah! my heart sickened to think of what was to come, and I prayed for strength and guidance, and in the midst of my perplexities felt yet thankful that the danger of the confinement was over; and that for the worse fortune which was to befall us, my dear wife was at least strong, and prepared in health.

I told Mrs. Stokes that she must let us have a cheaper



The Common Lot

room—a garret that should cost but a few shillings ; and though the good woman bade me remain in the apartments we occupied, yet, now that my wife was well, I felt it would be a crime to deprive my kind landlady of her chief means of livelihood ; and at length she promised to get me a garret as I wanted, and to make it as comfortable as might be ; and little Jemima declared that she would be glad beyond measure to wait on the mother and the child.

The room, then, was made ready ; and though I took some pains not to speak of the arrangement too suddenly to Mary, yet there was no need of disguise or hesitation : for when at last I told her—‘ Is that all ? ’ said she, and took my hand with one of her blessed smiles, and vowed that she and Jemima would keep the room as pretty and neat as possible. ‘ And I will cook your dinners,’ added she ; ‘ for you know you said I make the best roly-poly puddings in the world. God bless her ! I do think some women almost love poverty ; but I did not tell Mary how poor I was, nor had she any idea how lawyers’, and prison’s, and doctors’ fees had diminished the sum of money which she brought me when we came to the Fleet.

It was not, however, destined that she and her child should inhabit that little garret. We were to leave our lodgings on Monday morning ; but on Saturday evening the child was seized with convulsions, and all Sunday the mother watched and prayed for it ; but it pleased God to take the innocent infant from us, and on Sunday, at midnight, it lay a corpse in its mother’s bosom. Amen. We have other children, happy and well, now round about us ; and from the father’s heart the memory of this little thing has almost faded ; but I do believe that, every day of her life, the mother thinks of the first-born that was with her for so short a while ; and many and many a time has she taken her daughters to the grave, in St. Bride’s, where he lies buried, and wears still at her neck a little, little lock of gold hair, which she took from the head of the infant as he lay smiling in his coffin. It has happened to me to forget the child’s birthday, but to her never ; and often, in the midst of common talk, comes something that shows she is thinking of the child still,—some simple allusion that is to me inexpressibly affecting.

I shall not try to describe her grief, for such things are sacred and secret ; and a man has no business to place

them on paper for all the world to read. Nor should I have mentioned the child's loss at all, but that even that loss was the means of a great worldly blessing to us, as my wife has often with tears and thanks acknowledged.

While my wife was weeping over her child, I am ashamed to say I was distracted with other feelings besides those of grief for its loss ; and I have often since thought what a master—nay, destroyer—of the affections want is, and have learned from experience to be thankful for *daily bread*. That acknowledgement of weakness which we make in imploring to be relieved from hunger and from temptation, is surely wisely put in our daily prayer. Think of it you who are rich, and take heed how you turn a beggar away.

The child lay there in its wicker cradle, with its sweet fixed smile in its face (I think the angels in heaven must have been glad to welcome that pretty innocent smile) ; and it was only the next day, after my wife had gone to lie down, and I sat keeping watch by it, that I remembered the condition of its parents, and thought, I can't tell with what a pang, that I had not money left to bury the little thing, and wept bitter tears of despair. Now, at last, I thought I must apply to my poor mother, for this was a sacred necessity ; and I took paper, and wrote her a letter at the baby's side, and told her of our condition. But, thank Heaven ! I never sent the letter ; for as I went to the desk to get sealing-wax, and seal that dismal letter, my eyes fell upon the diamond-pin that I had quite forgotten, and that was lying in the drawer of the desk.

I looked into the bedroom,—my poor wife was asleep ; she had been watching for three nights and days, and had fallen asleep from sheer fatigue ; and I ran out to a pawn-broker's with the diamond, and received seven guineas for it, and coming back put the money into the landlady's hand, and told her to get what was needful. My wife was still asleep when I came back ; and when she woke, we persuaded her to go downstairs to the landlady's parlour, and meanwhile the necessary preparations were made, and the poor child consigned to its coffin.

The next day, after all was over, Mrs. Stokes gave me back three out of the seven guineas ; and then I could not help sobbing out to her my doubts and wretchedness, telling her that this was the last money I had ; and when

that was gone, I knew not what was to become of the best wife that ever a man was blest with.

My wife was downstairs with the woman. Poor Gus, who was with me, and quite as much affected as any of the party, took me by the arm, and led me downstairs; and we quite forgot all about the prison and the rules, and walked a long, long way across Blackfriars Bridge, the kind fellow striving as much as possible to console me.

When we came back, it was in the evening. The first person who met me in the house was my kind mother, who fell into my arms with many tears, and who rebuked me tenderly for not having told her of my necessities. She never should have known of them, she said; but she had not heard from me since I wrote announcing the birth of the child, and she felt uneasy about my silence; and meeting Mr. Smithers in the street, asked from him news concerning me: whereupon, that gentleman, with some little show of alarm, told her that he thought her daughter-in-law was confined in an uncomfortable place; that Mrs. Hoggarty had left us; finally, that I was in prison. This news at once dispatched my poor mother on her travels, and she had only just come from the prison, where she learned my address.

I asked her whether she had seen my wife, and how she found her. Rather to my amaze, she said that Mary was out with the landlady when she arrived; and eight—nine o'clock came, and she was absent still.

At ten o'clock returned—not my wife, but Mrs. Stokes, and with her a gentleman, who shook hands with me on coming into the room, and said, 'Mr. Titmarsh, I don't know whether you will remember me: my name is Tiptoff. I have brought you a note from Mrs. Titmarsh, and a message from my wife, who sincerely commiserates your loss, and begs you will not be uneasy at Mrs. Titmarsh's absence. She has been good enough to promise to pass the night with Lady Tiptoff; and I am sure you will not object to her being away from you, while she is giving happiness to a sick mother and a sick child.' After a few more words, my lord left us. My wife's note only said that Mrs. Stokes would tell me all.

CHAPTER XIII

IN WHICH IT IS SHOWN THAT A GOOD WIFE IS THE BEST
DIAMOND A MAN CAN WEAR IN HIS BOSOM

‘MRS. TITMARSH, ma’am,’ says Mrs. Stokes, ‘before I gratify your curiosity, ma’am, permit me to observe that angels is scarce ; and it’s rare to have one, much more two, in a family. Both your son and your daughter-in-law, ma’am, are of that uncommon sort ; they are, now, reely, ma’am.’

My mother said she thanked God for both of us ; and Mrs. Stokes proceeded :—

‘When the fu—when the seminary, ma’am, was concluded this morning, your poor daughter-in-law was glad to take shelter in my humble parlour, ma’am, where she wept, and told a thousand stories of the little cherub that’s gone. Heaven bless us ! it was here but a month, and no one could have thought it could have done such a many things in that time. But a mother’s eyes are clear, ma’am ; and I had just such another angel, my dear little Antony, that was born before Jemima, and would have been twenty-three now were he in this wicked world, ma’am. However, I won’t speak of him, ma’am, but of what took place.

‘You must know, ma’am, that Mrs. Titmarsh remained downstairs while Mr. Samuel was talking with his friend, Mr. Hoskins ; and the poor thing would not touch a bit of dinner, though we had it made comfortable ; and after dinner, it was with difficulty I could get her to sup a little drop of wine-and-water, and dip a toast in it. It was the first morsel that had passed her lips for many a long hour, ma’am.

‘Well, she would not speak, and I thought it best not to interrupt her ; but she sat and looked at my two youngest that were playing on the rug ; and just as Mr. Titmarsh and his friend Gus went out, the boy brought the newspaper, ma’am,—it always comes from three to four, and I began a-reading of it. But I couldn’t read much, for thinking of poor Mr. Sam’s sad face, as he went out, and the sad story

he told me about his money being so low, and every now and then I stopped reading, and bade Mrs. T. not to take on so ; and told her some stories about my dear little Antony.

“ Ah ! ” says she, sobbing, and looking at the young ones, “ you have other children, Mrs. Stokes ; but that—that was my only one ; ” and she flung back in her chair, and cried fit to break her heart ; and I knew that the cry would do her good, and so went back to my paper—the *Morning Post*, ma’am ; I always read it, for I like to know what’s a-going on in the West End.

‘ The very first thing that my eyes lighted upon was this : “ Wanted immediately, a respectable person as wet-nurse. Apply at No. — Grosvenor Square.” “ Bless us and save us ! ” says I, “ here’s poor Lady Tiptoff ill ; ” for I knew her ladyship’s address, and how she was confined on the very same day with Mrs. T. ; and, for the matter of that, her ladyship knows *my* address, having visited here.

‘ A sudden thought came over me. “ My dear Mrs. Titmarsh,” said I, “ you know how poor and how good your husband is.”

“ Yes,” says she, rather surprised.

“ Well, my dear,” says I, looking her hard in the face, “ Lady Tiptoff, who knows him, wants a nurse for her son, Lord Poynings. Will you be a brave woman, and look for the place, and mayhap replace the little one that God has taken from you ? ”

‘ She began to tremble and blush ; and then I told her what you, Mr. Sam, had told me the other day about your money matters ; and no sooner did she hear it, than she sprang to her bonnet, and said, “ Come, come ” : and in five minutes she had me by the arm, and we walked together to Grosvenor Square. The air did her no harm, Mr. Sam, and during the whole of the walk she never cried but once, and then it was at seeing a nursery-maid in the square.

‘ A great fellow in livery opens the door, and says, “ You’re the forty-fifth ’as come about this ’ere place ; but, fust, let me ask you a preliminary question. Are you a H Irish-woman ? ”

“ No, sir,” says Mrs. T.

“ That suffisht, mem,” says the gentleman in plush ; “ I see you not by your axnt. Step this way, ladies, if

you please. You'll find some more candidix for the place upstairs ; but I sent away forty-four happlicants, because they *was* Hirish."

"We were taken upstairs over very soft carpets, and brought into a room, and told by an old lady who was there to speak very softly, for my lady was only two rooms off. And when I asked how the baby and her ladyship were, the old lady told me both were pretty well ; only the doctor said Lady Tiptoff was too delicate to nurse any longer ; and so it was considered necessary to have a wet-nurse.

"There was another young woman in the room—a tall, fine woman as ever you saw—that looked very angry and contempshious at Mrs. T. and me, and said, "I've brought a letter from the duchess whose daughter I nust ; and I think, Mrs. Blenkinsop, mem, my Lady Tiptoff may look far before she finds such another nuss as me. Five feet six high, had the small-pox, married to a corporal in the Lifeguards, perfectly healthy, best of charactiers, only drink water ; and as for the child, ma'am, if her ladyship had six, I've a plenty for them all."

"As the woman was making this speech, a little gentleman in black came in from the next room, treading as if on velvet. The woman got up, and made him a low curtsy, and folding her arms on her great broad chest, repeated the speech she had made before. Mrs. T. did not get up from her chair, but only made a sort of a bow ; which, to be sure, I thought was ill manners, as this gentleman was evidently the apothecary. He looked hard at her, and said, "Well, my good woman, and are you come about the place, too ?"

"Yes, sir," says she, blushing.

"You seem very delicate. How old is your child ? How many have you had ? What character have you ?"

"Your wife didn't answer a word ; so I stepped up, and said, "Sir," says I, "this lady has just lost her first child, and isn't used to look for places, being the daughter of a captain in the navy ; so you'll excuse her want of manners in not getting up when you came in."

"The doctor at this sat down and began talking very kindly to her ; he said he was afraid that her application would be unsuccessful, as Mrs. Horner came very strongly recommended from the Duchess of Doncaster, whose relative

Lady Tiptoff was; and presently my lady appeared, looking very pretty, ma'am, in an elegant lace-cap, and a sweet muslin *robe-de-sham*.

'A nurse came out of her ladyship's room with her; and while my lady was talking to us, walked up and down in the next room with something in her arms.

'First my lady spoke to Mrs. Horner, and then to Mrs. T.; but all the while she was talking, Mrs. Titmarsh, rather rudely as I thought, ma'am, was looking into the next room; looking—looking at the baby there with all her might. My lady asked her her name, and if she had any character; and as she did not speak, I spoke up for her, and said she was the wife of one of the best men in the world; that her ladyship knew the gentleman, too, and had brought him a haunch of venison. Then Lady Tiptoff looked up quite astonished, and I told the whole story, how you had been head clerk, and that rascal, Brough, had brought you to ruin. "Poor thing!" said my lady; Mrs. Titmarsh did not speak, but still kept looking at the baby; and the great big grenadier of a Mrs. Horner looked angrily at her.

" "Poor thing!" says my lady, taking Mrs. T.'s hand very kind, "she seems very young. How old are you, my dear?"

" "Five weeks and two days!" says your wife, sobbing.

'Mrs. Horner burst into a laugh; but there was a tear in my lady's eyes, for she knew what the poor thing was a-thinking of.

" "Silence, woman!" says she, angrily, to the great grenadier-woman, and at this moment the child in the next room began crying.

'As soon as your wife heard the noise, she sprang from her chair and made a step forward, and put both her hands to her breast and said, "The child—the child—give it me!" and then began to cry again.

'My lady looked at her for a moment, and then ran into the next room and brought her the baby; and the baby clung to her as if he knew her; and a pretty sight it was to see that dear woman with the child at her bosom.

'When my lady saw it, what do you think she did? After looking on it for a bit, she put her arms round your wife's neck and kissed her.

“My dear,” said she, “I am sure you are as good as you are pretty, and you shall keep the child; and I thank God for sending you to me!”

‘These were her very words; and Dr. Bland, who was standing by, says, “It’s a second judgement of Solomon!”

“I suppose, my lady, you don’t want *me*?” says the big woman, with another curtsy.

“Not in the least!” answers my lady, haughtily, and the grenadier left the room; and then I told all your story at full length, and Mrs. Blenkinsop kept me to tea, and I saw the beautiful room that Mrs. Titmarsh is to have next to Lady Tiptoff’s; and when my lord came home, what does he do but insist upon coming back with me here in a hackney-coach, as he said he must apologize to you for keeping your wife away.’

I could not help, in my own mind, connecting this strange event which, in the midst of our sorrow, came to console us, and in our poverty to give us bread,—I could not help connecting it with the *diamond-pin*, and fancying that the disappearance of that ornament had somehow brought a different and a better sort of luck into my family. And though some gents who read this, may call me a poor-spirited fellow for allowing my wife to go out to service, who was bred a lady and ought to have servants herself; yet, for my part, I confess I did not feel one minute’s scruple or mortification on the subject. If you love a person, is it not a pleasure to feel obliged to him? And this, in consequence, I felt. I was proud and happy at being able to think that my dear wife should be able to labour and earn bread for me, now misfortune had put it out of my power to support me and her. And now, instead of making any reflections of my own upon prison-discipline, I will recommend the reader to consult that admirable chapter in the life of Mr. Pickwick, in which the same theme is handled, and which shows how silly it is to deprive honest men of the means of labour just at the moment when they most want it. What could I do? There were one or two gents in the prison who could work (literary gents,—one wrote his *Travels in Mesopotamia*, and the other his *Sketches at Almack’s*, in the place); but all the occupation I could find was walking down Bridge Street, and then up Bridge Street, and staring at Alderman Waithman’s windows, and then at the black man who



The Judgment of Solomon

swept the crossing. I never gave him anything ; but I envied him his trade and his broom, and the money that continually fell into his old hat. But I was not allowed even to carry a broom.

Twice or thrice—for Lady Tiptoff did not wish her little boy often to breathe the air of such a close place as Salisbury Square—my dear Mary came in the thundering carriage to see me. They were merry meetings ; and—if the truth must be told—twice, when nobody was by, I jumped into the carriage and had a drive with her ; and when I had seen her home, jumped into another hackney-coach, and drove back. But this was only twice, for the system was dangerous, and it might bring me into trouble, and it cost three shillings from Grosvenor Square to Ludgate Hill.

Here, meanwhile, my good mother kept me company ; and what should we read of one day but the marriage of Mrs. Hoggarty and the Rev. Grimes Wapshot ! My mother, who never loved Mrs. H., now said that she should repent all her life having allowed me to spend so much of my time with that odious, ungrateful woman ; and added, that she and I too were justly punished for worshipping the Mammon of unrighteousness, and forgetting our natural feelings for the sake of my aunt's paltry lucre. Well, ' Amen ! ' said I, ' this is the end of all our fine schemes ! My aunt's money and my aunt's diamond were the causes of my ruin, and now they are clear gone, thank Heaven ! and I hope the old lady will be happy, and I must say I don't envy the Rev. Grimes Wapshot.' So we put Mrs. Hoggarty out of our thoughts, and made ourselves as comfortable as might be.

Rich and great people are slower in making Christians of their children than we poor ones, and little Lord Poynings was not christened until the month of June. A duke was one godfather, and Mr. Edmund Preston, the state secretary, another ; and that kind Lady Jane Preston, whom I have before spoken of, was the godmother to her nephew. She had not long been made acquainted with my wife's history ; and both she and her sister loved her heartily, and were very kind to her. Indeed, there was not a single soul in the house, high or low, but was fond of that good, sweet creature ; and the very footmen were as ready to serve her as they were their own mistress.

' I tell you what, sir,' says one of them [who has written

his Memoirs in this Magazine]¹, 'you see, Tit, my boy, I'm a connyshure, and up to snough; and if ever I see a lady in my life, Mrs. Titmarsh is one. I can't be familiar with her—I've tried——'

'Have you, sir?' said I.

'Don't look so indignant! I can't, I say, be familiar with her as I am with you. There's a somethink in her, a jennysquaw, that haws me, sir! and even my lord's own man, that 'as 'ad as much success as any gentleman in Europe—he says, that cuss him——'

'Mr. Charles,' says I, 'tell my lord's own man that, if he wants to keep his place and his whole skin, he will never address a single word to that lady, but such as a servant should utter in the presence of his mistress; and take notice that I am a gentleman, though a poor one, and will murder the first man who does her wrong!'

Mr. Charles only said 'Gammin!' to this; but, pshaw! in bragging about my own spirit, I forgot to say what great good fortune my dear wife's conduct procured for me.

On the christening day, Mr. Preston offered her first a five and then a twenty-pound note, but she declined either; but she did not decline a present that the two ladies made her together, and this was no other than *my release from the Fleet*. Lord Tiptoff's lawyer paid every one of the bills against me, and that happy christening day made me a free man. Ah! who shall tell the pleasure of that day, or the merry dinner we had in Mary's room at Lord Tiptoff's house, when my lord and my lady came upstairs to shake hands with me?

'I have been speaking to Mr. Preston,' says my lord, 'the gentleman with whom you had the memorable quarrel, and he has forgiven it, although he was in the wrong, and promises to do something for you. We are going down, meanwhile, to his house at Richmond; and be sure, Mr. Titmarsh, I will not fail to keep you in his mind.'

'Mrs. Titmarsh will do that,' says my lady; 'for Edmund is wofully smitten with her!' and Mary blushed and I laughed, and we were all very happy; and sure enough there came from Richmond a letter to me, stating that I was appointed fourth clerk in the Tape and Sealing-wax Office, with a salary of 80*l.* per annum.

Here, perhaps, my story ought to stop, for I was happy

¹ Omitted in later editions.



Over head and ears in love

at last, and have never since, thank Heaven ! known want ; but Gus insists that I should add how I gave up the place in the Tape and Sealing-wax Office, and for what reason. That excellent Lady Jane Preston is long gone, and so is Mr. P—— off in an apoplexy, and there is no harm now in telling the story.

The fact was, that Mr. Preston had fallen in love with Mary in a much more serious way than any of us imagined ; for I do believe he invited his brother-in-law to Richmond for no other purpose than to pay court to his son's nurse. And one day, as I was coming post-haste to thank him for the place he had procured for me, being directed by Mr. Charles to the 'scrubbery,' as he called it, which led down to the river,—there, sure enough, I found Mr. Preston on his knees too on the gravel-walk, and before him Mary, holding the little lord.

'Dearest creature !' says Mr. Preston, 'do but listen to me, and I'll make your husband consul at Timbuctoo ! He shall *never* know of it, I tell you ; he *can* never know of it. I pledge you my word as a cabinet minister ! Oh, don't look at me in that arch way ! by Heavens, your eyes kill me !'

Mary, when she saw me, burst out laughing, and ran down the lawn ; my lord making a huge crowing, too, and holding out his little fat hands. Mr. Preston, who was a heavy man, was slowly getting up, when, catching a sight of me, looking as fierce as the crater of Mount Etna,—he gave a start back and lost his footing, and rolled over and over, walloping into the water at the garden's edge. It was not deep, and he came bubbling and snorting out again in as much fright as fury.

'You d—d ungrateful villain !' says he, 'what do you stand there laughing for ?'

'I'm waiting your orders for Timbuctoo, sir,' says I, and laughed fit to die, and so did my Lord Tiptoff and his party, who joined us on the lawn ; and Jeames the footman came forward and helped Mr. Preston out of the water.

'Oh, you old sinner !' says my lord, as his brother-in-law came up the slope. 'Will that heart of yours be always so susceptible, you romantic, apoplectic, immoral man ?'

Mr. Preston went away, looking blue with rage, and ill treated his wife for a whole month afterwards.

‘At any rate,’ says my lord, ‘Titmarsh here has got a place through our friend’s unhappy attachment; and Mrs. Titmarsh has only laughed at him, so there is no harm there. It’s an ill wind that blows nobody good, you know.’

‘Such a wind as that, my lord, with due respect to you, shall never do good to me. I have learned in the past few years what it is to make friends with the Mammon of unrighteousness; and that out of such friendship no good comes in the end to honest men. It shall never be said that Sam Titmarsh got a place because a great man was in love with his wife; and were the situation ten times as valuable, I should blush every day I entered the office-doors, in thinking of the base means by which my fortune was made. You have made me free, my lord; and thank God! I am willing to work. I can easily get a clerkship with the assistance of my friends; and with that and my wife’s income, we can manage honestly to face the world.’

This rather long speech I made with some animation; for, look you, I was not over well pleased that his lordship should think me capable of speculating in any way on my wife’s beauty.

My lord at first turned red, and looked rather angry; but at last he held out his hand and said, ‘You are right, Titmarsh, and I am wrong; and let me tell you in confidence, that I think you are a very honest fellow. You sha’n’t lose by your honesty, I promise you.’

Nor did I; for I am at this present moment Lord Tip-toff’s steward and right-hand man; and am I not a happy father? and is not my wife loved and respected by all the country? and is not Gus Hoskins my brother-in-law, partner with his excellent father in the leather way, and the delight of all his nephews and nieces for his tricks and fun?

As for Mr. Brough, that gentleman’s history would fill a volume of itself. Since he vanished from the London world, he has become celebrated on the Continent, where he has acted a thousand parts, and met all sorts of changes of high and low fortune. One thing we may at least admire in the man, and that is, his undaunted courage; and I can’t help thinking, as I have said before, that there must be some good in him, seeing the way in which

his family are faithful to him. With respect to Roundhand, I had best also speak tenderly. The case of Roundhand *v.* Tidd is still in the memory of the public; nor can I ever understand how Bill Tidd, so poetic as he was, could ever take on with such a fat, odious, vulgar woman as Mrs. R., who was old enough to be his mother.

As soon as we were in prosperity, Mr. and Mrs. Grimes Wapshot made overtures to be reconciled to us; and Mr. Wapshot laid bare to me all the baseness of Mr. Smithers's conduct in the Brough transaction. Smithers had also endeavoured to pay his court to me, once when I went down to Somersetshire; but I cut his pretensions short, as I have shown. 'He it was,' said Mr. Wapshot, 'who induced Mrs. Grimes (Mrs. Hoggarty she was then) to purchase the West Diddlesex shares; receiving, of course, a large bonus for himself. But directly he found that Mrs. Hoggarty had fallen into the hands of Mr. Brough, and that he should lose the income he made from the lawsuits with her tenants and from the management of her landed property, he determined to rescue her from that villain Brough, and came to town for the purpose. He also,' added Mr. Wapshot, 'vented his malignant slander against me, but Heaven was pleased to frustrate his base schemes. In the proceedings consequent on Brough's bankruptcy, Mr. Smithers could not appear; for his own share in the transactions of the Company would have been most certainly shown up. During his absence from London, I became the husband—the happy husband of your aunt. But though, my dear sir, I have been the means of bringing her to grace, I cannot disguise from you that Mrs. W. has faults which all my pastoral care has not enabled me to eradicate. She is close of her money, sir—very close; nor can I make that charitable use of her property which, as a clergyman, I ought to do; for she has tied up every shilling of it, and only allows me half a crown a week for pocket-money. In temper, too, she is very violent. During the first years of our union, I strove with her; yea, I chastised her; but her perseverance, I must confess, got the better of me. I make no more remonstrances, but am as a lamb in her hands, and she leads me whithersoever she pleases.'

Mr. Wapshot concluded his tale by borrowing half a crown from me (it was at the Somerset Coffee-house in

the Strand, where he came, in the year 1832, to wait upon me), and I saw him go from thence into the gin-shop opposite, and come out of the gin-shop half an hour afterwards, reeling across the streets, and perfectly intoxicated.

He died next year : when his widow, who called herself Mrs. Hoggarty-Grimes-Wapshot, of Castle Hoggarty, said that over the grave of her saint all earthly resentments were forgotten, and proposed to come and live with us ; paying us, of course, a handsome remuneration. But this offer my wife and I respectfully declined ; and once more she altered her will, which once more she had made in our favour ; called us ungrateful wretches and pampered menials, and left all her property to the Irish Hoggarties. But seeing my wife one day in a carriage with Lady Tiptoff, and hearing that we had been at the great ball at Tiptoff Castle, and that I had grown to be a rich man, she changed her mind again, sent for me on her death-bed, and left me the farms of Slopperton and Squashtail, with all her savings for fifteen years. Peace be to her soul ! for certainly she left me a very pretty property.

Though I am no literary man myself, my cousin Michael (who generally, when he is short of coin, comes down and passes a few months with us) says that my Memoirs may be of some use to the public (meaning, I suspect, to himself) ; and if so, I am glad to serve him and them, and hereby take farewell, bidding all gents who peruse this, to be cautious of their money, if they have it ; to be still more cautious of their friends' money ; to remember that great profits imply great risks ; and that the great shrewd capitalists of this country would not be content with four per cent for their money, if they could securely get more ; above all, I entreat them never to embark in any speculation, of which the conduct is not perfectly clear to them, and of which the agents are not perfectly open and loyal.

LOOSE SKETCHES

(Written for *The Britannia*)

BY MR. MICHAEL ANGELO TITMUSH

ROLANDSECK

[*The Britannia*, June 19, 1841.]

I WAS making a little tour on the Rhine last year in company with my wife and my three girls, their governess, a few poodles, a parrot, lady's maid, and the other useful baggage which makes the operation of travelling so delightful for a married man. At the frontier of every little absurd German principality, at the landing-place of each steamboat, going from the inns, coming from the inns, you have the delight of superintending about forty indescribable female trunks, and bandboxes. You who have come out after a year's labour in London to rid your mind of care; you, who pay with your hard earnings every shilling of the journey; you, who have only a little valise of your own that a baby could carry, must bear all this tremendous weight of family upon your back; and be contented, forsooth, and pretend to take pleasure. There are certain periods in the year when, it is my firm opinion, families ought to be suppressed altogether. Asylums should be erected for them, where they should remain locked up and cared for during the six weeks that the head of the house was away upon his holiday. All decent comforts should be provided for them, but on no account should they be allowed, for the period in question, to quit the gates of the asylum, or to communicate by letter with the absent *paterfamilias*. In this way a man *might* have a chance, at least for six weeks in the year, to fling his cares off his shoulders, and to breathe the free air.

We had somehow made an acquaintance at Cologne with

a young fellow who insisted on pushing into my hand a glazed card, smelling very much of musk, on which was engraved the name of Mr. George Delamere; and being asked by my wife whether he was related to the Delameres in our part of the country, who are very great people, the gentleman said he *was* a distant connexion of the family, which made Mrs. X. excessively civil to him. We walked about the town together, my daughter Jemima dangling on his arm. I took Mrs. X., of course, the governess following with the young ones. We walked about the most inodorous town in Europe; saw the churches, cathedrals, Rubens's house, and what not; and heartily tired I was of it; for I don't care for your pictures and antiquities a jot. One picture that struck me in the place, however, was to be seen in every square and street of it, and that was no other than the likeness of the savage woman with long hair and a looking-glass, which figures over the Macassar-oil bills of the famous Mr. Rowland, of Hatton Garden; these bills stared us in the face wherever we went, and being a commercial man myself, I could not but point out with pride and exultation to my girls and their mother this proof of the great energy of our English tradesmen, who push their manufactures into all quarters of the globe.

Young Delamere and Jemima seemed to be very thick together, and I begged Mrs. X. to be very cautious as to her daughter's behaviour, and as to encouraging the young fellow too much. 'Pooh! pooh! X.,' said my wife, 'you are always thinking of Dixon, the drysalter, as if Jemima was made to marry and die in Broad Street! This young Delamere is a thousand times more *distingué*; and I'll ask Sir John about him the very next time we go into Hampshire.'

He *was* a smart-looking chap, certainly—somewhat too smart, as I thought—but I am a plain man; my wife vowed he was perfection, and so did the girls. He was dressed in the following way: He had a blue cap, with a gold band and tassel, stuck on one side of his head, which was covered with a profusion of glossy brown curls. He had a tuft on his chin, his collars turned down, and fastened at the neck with a loose green satin handkerchief, and large carbuncle pin. He wore a blouse, embroidered with red worsted, and a black leather girdle round his waist; strawberry-cream-coloured trousers, and drab jean boots with glossy leather

tips. I remember the dress so well, because my wife, on our arrival at Frankfort, made me get just such another, and turn down my collars, and wear a tuft on my chin. I can tell you that my great, bristly, shining double-jowl looked rather queer thus displayed, and that *my* girdle was some ten inches more round the waist than Delamere's. How the chaps on 'Change would have laughed to see Bob X. walk in such a costume!

Well, sir, on our passage up the Rhine, Delamere was always talking poetry and that kind of stuff to the girls, knew the country well, could ask for what he wanted in the regular German twang, and was as useful to us as possible. One day Jemima came to me with a very important air, and said, 'Do you know, papa, he has *published*?'

'What! Dixon, my dear?' says I; 'every fool knows that. Dick Dixon's pamphlet on the tallow-trade was as good a thing as ever I read.'

'Psha! papa, I don't mean Mr. Dixon and his odious tallow; I mean Mr. Delamere. He says he has published a great deal of poetry, and I'm going—I'm going to show him some of mine—that Rebus you know that gained me the prize:—

'I am first in the last, in the lost I am found;
In the flower you'll see me, though not in the ground;
In the lily and lilac and lotus I'm hid;
Though not seen in the eye, yet I'm known to its lid;
In the castle I lurk, in the palace am seen,
Though banished, alas! from the cot on the green;
Deep hid in the violet's bosom I dip;
Indeed, I'm the very first thing on your lip.'

'It must be whiskers,' says I, as quick as thought.

'Psha!' cried Jemima to Mr. Delamere, who strolled up, 'you who have published I'm sure will be able to guess my little effusion. Though, why do I ask? perhaps you saw it in the *Pocket-Book* last year?'

'Pray go on, dear miss,' said he.

Jemima continued—

'Indeed, I'm the very first thing on your lip;
Though not known to the river, I'm found in its flow;
Unseen in the breezes, I'm still in their blow;
Not felt in the fire, yet I'm part of the coal,
And am ay the last thing that is found in the bowl.'

‘That’s lemon peel,’ said I ; but I was wrong again. Jemima went on :—

‘When you turn to the right, though of me you’re bereft,
I’m the very first thing that you meet on your left ;
I always am heard in the toll of the bell,
And am lying like truth at the end of a well.
Is a lady without me ? don’t deign to accost her,
You’d find her a sad begging-letter impostor.
You will certainly own that I’m present at lunch,
Though absent when dinner and breakfast you munch ;
And yet I am never away from your meals,
You have me alike in soles, salmons, and eels ;
In mutton, beef, chickens, although I am missed,
Yet in veal, and in lamb, and in fowls, I exist ;
I lie in your pillow, though not on your bed.
Say, gentles, my name, for my riddle is read.’

It was the letter L, as Delamere guessed like lightning ; and the passage about the lady turning into the begging-letter impostor was a sly cut that Miss Jemima made at me ; for the fact is, I had paid a couple of guineas to the person in question, and my wife never ceased laughing at me about it, though I declare I did it at her express suggestion. I only introduce this little charade to show what a superior girl my Jemima is, full of poetry and imagination.

These imaginative young ladies are always on the lookout, however, for what they call kindred spirits, and I saw very soon that the dashing, poetic Mr. Delamere was cutting poor Dick Dixon out.

He had a whole host of stories and poetry, to be sure, and knew all the legends of all the places which we visited. Off Drachenfels he spouted to us Lord Byron’s lines ; and on the day that we paid a visit to Rolandseck, where we had a picnic party, he told us the following remarkable tale, not to be found in any of the guide-books, and which, perhaps, you do not know :—

THE GIFT OF THE FAIRIES

‘The town of Rolandseck was so called from a noble family of that name which inhabited the place, and which is not yet extinct. As for the story which has been put into verse by the poet Schiller, that, madam, has not the slightest authenticity, and, you may depend upon it, is all a flam.’

‘A what, sir ?’ said my wife.

‘Never mind, mamma, and do let Mr. Delamere continue,’ cried Jemima.

The young gentleman resumed, in an inspired voice : ‘Look at the silver Rhine, madam, flowing before us so silent and majestic ; since the steamboats have passed up and down that river, with their great snorting chimneys and furious frothing paddles, they have not only driven the fish out of the river, but, what was infinitely more precious, the fairies.’

‘Good Heavens ! do you believe in them ? ’ cries Jemima, quite delighted.

‘Miss,’ said Mr. Delamere, ‘there are several more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy. Fairies are among these, and I have proofs of their existence ; proofs in my portmanteau at home, for the matter of that,—but not since the introduction of steamboats. No, no ; they could not bear your cursed unromantic engines and boilers, and have fled the river for ever.

‘In the time of the first lord of Rolandseck, however, the case was very different, and fairies, madam, were as common in these parts—as common as policemen in the Strand. It’s a fact, as you shall allow, ere long.

‘The Lord of Rolandseck, after being married for twenty years to an amiable baroness, was at length blessed with a child. The fairies of his acquaintance had long foretold the birth of it ; and, when he had asked whether the child about to be born should be a young baron, the oracle he consulted replied that it should have the finest whiskers in Germany. Not a little did this assurance comfort Rolands-eck, who saw before him a long glorious race of progeny that should render his name famous for ever.

‘When the time of the baroness’s confinement drew near, her husband summoned all his principal fairy acquaintance to be witnesses of the birth and the christening :—the fairy Kalidora, of the fountain of youth—the fairy Odonta, of the pearls—the great enchanter Haarbart, who came from the Macassar coast, on a roaring fiery dragon, express to attend upon his friend.

“ ‘This ointment,” said the enchanter Haarbart, presenting a vase full of a ruby-coloured unguent, “shall make the locks of your child as curly and glossy as the golden ringlets of Venus.” ’ And so saying, Delamere passed his white fingers through his own hair, which was certainly the

most beautiful I ever saw. Jemima evidently had the same opinion of it.

"This rare powder," said this fairy Odonta, "shall make the baby's teeth, as soon as it has them, and to the remotest old age, as pure and white as are the pearls in my native waters."

'What beautiful teeth Mr. Delamere has himself!' whispered Jemima.

"This flask of precious water," said the fairy Kalidora, "shall cause the baby's cheek to be as beautifully white and red as the lilies and roses which compose the essence."

'Indeed, Mr. Delamere,' said the poor girl, simply, 'one would think that you inherited the three fairies' gifts; for sure no one ever saw such beautiful teeth, hair, and complexion.'

'Madam, I HAVE *inherited them*,' answered the young man, blushing deeply; 'and therefore I am bound to believe in the existence of fairies;—but to continue the tale:

"As for riches and goodness," said the three enchanters in a breath, "you, Sir Baron, are quite rich enough in all conscience; and are so good a man, that any child of yours can't fail to have the best of education and example. You will do more for it on this score than all of us fairies can do."

'The baron thanked his guests for their politeness, and longed for the time when he should press his darling son in his arms.

"As for the whiskers," said Haarbart, archly, "I guarantee them." At this instant the nurse burst into the room with a baby in her arms, and all the guns of the castle began roaring a salute. "I wish you joy," said the nurse, "my lady is quite well, and you have a little darling baby the very picture of you."

"My boy, my blessed boy! my fair-haired hope, my brave, my beautiful!" said the baron, addressing the child in that impassioned tone in which Mr. Macready apostrophizes the little girl who acts his son in *William Tell*; "my own—own boy!"

"My lord," said the nurse, dropping a curtsy, "it's a dear little darling, sure enough—sure enough; but it's a girl!"

"A WHAT?" roared the baron, dropping the innocent thing as though it had been a hot potato—not a lovely smiling infant. "Fiend! unsay the word;"—but, of

course, the nurse could not unsay the word, and ran off with the baby in the greatest fright in the world.

“Here’s a pretty business!” said the enchanter Haarbart, and was so puzzled that he thought the best plan was to call for his dragon at once, and to fly off as fast as might be. The other two fairies looked at each other—at the poor baron, who was stamping and raging about the room—and could not help bursting out laughing; indeed it was a deuce of a perplexity, for what was spoken was spoken, and the oracle having once said the word whiskers, whiskers of course there must be. What words can paint the agony of Rolandseck, or describe his dreadful disappointment!

‘He became an altered, wretched man. He never once asked again to see his daughter, would not speak to his wife, and speedily announced his intention of going to the Holy Land, whither he went, with a gallant train of retainers, consigning his castle to the care of his brother, the Chevalier de Rolandseck.

‘Years rolled on; the baron never returned—never wrote a single line to his unhappy lady—but left her and her daughter to take care of themselves.

‘When Kalidora was seventeen, she had the most beautiful teeth, hair, and complexion of any lady in Germany—was a model of grace, virtue, and loveliness, and, as for the whiskers, had no more than grow on the palm of my hand. There was no more down upon her cheek than upon that of a peach—and it was pretty much the same colour. She could sing, dance, embroider, and play the harpsichord to perfection, and the young knights far and near came courting to her, and vowed that she was the fairest of the fair.

‘But though she might have a preference, as a young lady of her age and beauty naturally will; and though the young Count Maximilian von Kalbsbraten had some idea that he was the person upon whom the lovely heiress had bestowed her heart’s young affections, neither Maximilian nor she had any opportunity of cultivating each other’s acquaintance much; for the fact was, there were domestic obstacles that stood sadly in the way of their mutual happiness.

‘The obstacle was no other than the wicked Chevalier de

Rolandseck, a man of lawless passions and inordinate lust for gain ; he could not behold the charms of his niece without emotion,—he could not think of the vast wealth to which she was heiress without longing to possess it. He sent to Rome and procured a dispensation from the Pope ; he was in favour with the Emperor, and got that monarch's order to the young lady to espouse him. He had red hair—the worst teeth and complexion you ever saw—a humpback, and a mind as crooked as his person. As for the fairies' gifts, which he would have done well to use (for even after shaving what is there that so allays the irritation as one of them, let alone the benefit it confers on the complexion?)—but no—he wouldn't. He would not believe in the gifts of the fairies, although he saw their efficacy in Kalidora's own person.

'Such was the state of things when the lovely Kalidora was just about to attain her eighteenth year. On her birthday it was solemnly declared that she should wed her odious uncle. The Emperor Frederic Barbarossa vowed that he himself would be present at the nuptials ; the wedding-clothes were ordered for the lady ; and the most fashionable tailors from Vienna came down, in order to deck the bridegroom, and make his hump appear as little hideous as possible. This a tailor may do ; but can he alter the hair ? can he improve the complexion ? can he make the teeth white which are naturally of a disgusting black ? No. The very care which the Chevalier took to decorate his person only made him appear the more hateful to Kalidora. She asked to go into a cloister in vain ; the Chevalier was too eager to possess her to consent. She could not commit suicide ; the principles in which she had been brought up by her excellent mother forbade her. Ha ! a sudden thought crossed her ! She asked to be left alone for the fortnight previous to her marriage, promising that then she would accompany her uncle to the altar. That permission was granted to her—that solitude she asked she had.

“ Bless us and save us ! ” said the waiting-woman, on examining her room after she left it on the fatal day (the girl knew the value of a fine head of hair, and used to make free with her lady's Macass—with the precious ointment that the enchanter Haarbart gave her)—“ Bless us and

save us ! ” said the maid, “ there’s not a single drop left in the bottle ! ”

‘ The Lady Kalidora went forth, accompanied by her weeping mother ; a veil of lace covered her fair features as she passed onward to the chapel of the castle. Banners were floating there, I wot, and organs solemn pealing. Tapers of huge size, in golden sconces, burned on the altars, and smoking incenses filled the lofty aisles. A magnificent company was assembled to witness the ceremonial, and Almaine’s Emperor, with the crown of Charlemagne on his imperial brow, his brave electors and his peerless chivalry around him, stood waiting at the altar to give away the bride.

‘ A hideous leer lighted up the ill-complexioned features of the bridegroom as he took the hand, so white, so soft, so clammy, and so passive, which the poor trembling girl was fain to give him, as, faltering, she tottered towards the shrine. Advancing then unto the altar-steps, the mighty Emperor Frederic Barbarossa said to the bride, “ Lift up that envious veil—lift up that veil, my Lady Kalidora, that I may gaze upon your peerless face ! ”

‘ The lady lifted up the veil, and laughed madly, and shrieked out, “ Ha ! ha ! ha ! ” as she tumbled back into the arms of her mother.

‘ The Lady Kalidora had a beard as big as Mr. Muntz’s.

‘ Gentles, shall I tell you more ? Shall I tell you how the base Chevalier shrunk from the union with the hapless bearded lady, and died speedily of the terror that the sight occasioned ? Shall I tell you how young Von Kalbsbraten, spite of the obstacle, would make her his own ; how she refused for very shame ; and though she shaved and shaved, the odious beard still grew ? Shall I add, that at length a weary pilgrim, Rowland of Rolandseck, returned to his father’s halls, and found his daughter in the state described ? *He cured her* ; yes, he freed her cheek from superfluous hairs, that are the greatest detriment to beauty, by the use of a celebrated Depilatory, which he had discovered in the seraglios of Constantinople. The mention of the place where he obtained this made the old Lady of Rolandseck rather jealous ; but she had suffered—he had suffered—they had all suffered, and they wisely determined to think no more of by-gones, but be happy.

‘From the Lady Kalidora of Rolandseck is descended a well-known family of our own land, which still possesses the *gift of the fairies*.’

‘O sir! how I long to see some of them!’ said Jemima, clapping her hands.

‘You shall, miss,’ said Delamere; and, politely bowing to the ladies, he rose and left us.

Next morning, as I was walking out very early from Madame Frichs’s inn, where we lodged at Godesberg, I saw a man in a blue velvet cap with a gold tassel, strawberry-cream-coloured trousers, and jean boots, placarding the walls with some papers, in English and German, about oil for the hair. He did not wait to see me, but sprang over a hedge, and left me to pursue my walk until breakfast.

My man put into my hands, on returning, a parcel, ‘with Mr. Delamere’s compliments’; it contained:—

Four bottles	Rowland’s	Macassar Oil,
Four ditto	ditto	Kalydor,
Four ditto	ditto	Odonto,
Two ditto	ditto	Depilatory.

with a request that I would pay the amount at the inn. As for the Depilatory, my ladies had no whiskers, luckily, to remove, and he might as well have left that out.

I am inclined to think, after all, that the fellow was an impostor, and no more connected with Rowland’s house than I am. But I always tell the story to have a laugh against Miss Jemima (Mrs. Dick Dixon that is now), who chose to make game of her father, forsooth, about Ady’s business. Ha, ha! madam, there are two can play at that, I warrant you.

LITTLE SPITZ

A LENTEN ANECDOTE, FROM THE GERMAN OF PROFESSOR
SPASS

BY MICHAEL ANGELO TITMARSH

[George Cruikshank's *Omnibus*, October, 1841.]

‘ I THINK,’ said Rebecca, flinging down her beautiful eyes to the ground, and heaving a great sigh,—‘ I think, Signor Lorenzo, I could eat a bit of—sausage.’

‘ Of *what* ? ’ said Lorenzo, bouncing up and forgetting all sense of politeness in the strange demand. ‘ My dearest madam, *you* eat a sausage ? ’

‘ Ha, ha, I’m blesht,’ shouted Abednego, Rebecca’s papa, ‘ I’m blesht, if Signor Lorenz does not think you want to eat the unclean animal, Rebecca, my soul’s darling. These shtudents are dull fellows, look you, and only know what’s in their books. Why, there are in dis vicked world no less than four hundred kindsh of shausages, Signor Lorenz, of which Herr Bürcke, the court butcher, will show you the resheipts.—Confess, now, you thought my darling wanted to eat pig—faugh ! ’

Rebecca’s countenance, at the very idea, assumed an expression of the most intolerable disgust, and she gazed reproachfully at Lorenzo. That young man blushed and looked particularly foolish, as he said: ‘ Pardon me, dearest madam, for entertaining a thought so unworthy. *I did*, I confess, think of pork-sausages, when you spoke, and although pretty learned on most subjects, am indeed quite ignorant upon the matter of which Herr Abednego has just been speaking.’

‘ I told you so,’ says Abednego. ‘ Why, my goot sir, dere is mutton-sausages, and veal-sausages, and beef-sausages, and——’

‘ Silence, papa,’ said Rebecca, sharply, ‘ for what has Signor Lorenz to do with such things ? I’m very sorry that

I—that I offended him by asking for any dish of the kind, and pray let him serve us with what he has.’

Rebecca sank down in a chair looking very faint ; but Lorenzo started up and swore that he would have himself cut up into little pieces, stuffed into a bladder, and made sausage-meat of, rather than that the lovely Israelite should go without the meat that she loved. And, indeed, such was the infatuated passion which this young man entertained for the Jewess, that I have not the least doubt but that he would have been ready to do as he said. ‘I will send down immediately into the town,’ continued he, ‘and in ten minutes my messenger will be back again.’

‘He must run very fast,’ said the lady, appeased, ‘but I thought you said, Signor Lorenz, that you kept but one servant, and that your old housekeeper was too ill to move?’

‘Madam, make your mind quite easy.—I have the best little messenger in the world.’

‘Is it a fairy,’ said the Jewess, ‘or a household demon? They say that you great students have many such at your orders, and I should like to see one, of all things.’

‘You shall see him, dearest lady,’ replied the student, who took from the shelf a basket and napkin, put a piece of money into the basket (I believe the poor devil had not many of them), and wrote a few words on a paper which he set by the side of the coin. ‘Mr. Bürcke,’ wrote he, ‘Herr Hofmetzler’ (that is Mr. Court Butcher), ‘have the goodness to send per bearer, a rix-dollar’s worth of the best sausages—not pork.’ And then Lorenz opened his window, looked into his little garden, whistled, and shouted out: ‘Hallo! *Spitz!*’

‘Now,’ said he, ‘you shall see my familiar;’ and a great scratching and whining was presently heard at the door, which made Rebecca wonder, and poor old fat Abednego turn as yellow as a parsnip. I warrant the old wretch thought that a demon with horns and a tail was coming into the room.

The familiar spirit which now made its appearance *had* a tail certainly, and a very long one for such a little animal; but there was nothing terrible about him. The fact is, it was Lorenz’s little turnspit-dog, that used to do many such commissions for the student, who lived half a mile out of the city of Krähwinkel, where the little dog was

perfectly well known. He was a very sagacious, faithful, ugly little dog, as ever was seen. He had a long black back and tail, and very little yellow legs; but he ran excessively fast on those little legs, and regularly fetched his master's meat and rolls from the city, and brought them to that lonely cottage which the student, for quiet's sake, occupied at a short distance from town.

'When I give him white money,' said Lorenz, caressing the little faithful beast, that wagged his tail between the calves of his master's legs, and looked up fondly in his face, 'when I give him white money, he goes to the butcher's; when I give him copper, he runs to the baker's,—and was never yet known to fail. Go, my little Spitz, as fast as legs will carry thee. Go, my dog, and bring with thee the very best of sausages for the breakfast of the peerless Rebecca Abednego.' With this gallant speech, which pleased the lady greatly, and caused her to try to blush as much as possible, the little dog took the basket in his mouth, and trotted downstairs, and went off on his errand. While he is on the way to Krähwinkel and back, I may as well mention briefly who his master was, how he came to be possessed of this little animal, and how the fair Jewess had found her way to a Christian student's house.

Lorenz's parents lived in Polkwitz, which everybody knows is a hundred leagues from Krähwinkel. They were the most pious, orderly, excellent people ever known, and their son bade fair to equal them in all respects. He had come to Krähwinkel to study at the famous university there, but he never frequented the place except for the lectures; never made one at the noisy students' drinking bouts; and was called, for his piety and solitary life, the hermit.

The first year of his residence, he was to be seen not only at lectures, but at church regularly. He never ate meat on a Friday; he fasted all through Lent; he confessed twice in a month; and was a model for all young students, not merely at Krähwinkel, Bonn, Jena, Halle, and other German universities; but those of Salamanca and the rest in Spain, of Bologna and other places of learning in Italy, nay, of Oxford and Cambridge in the island of England, would do well to take example by him, and lead the godly life which he led.

But I am sorry to say that learning oftentimes begets

pride, and Lorenzo Tisch, seeing how superior he was to all his companions, aye, and to most of the professors of the university, and plunging deeper and deeper daily into books, began to neglect his religious duties, at first a little, then a great deal, then to take no note of them at all ; for though, when the circumstances of this true history occurred it was the season of Lent, Lorenzo Tisch had not the slightest recollection of the fact, not having been at church, or looked into an almanac or a prayer-book, for many months before.

Lorenzo was allowed a handsome income of a hundred rix-dollars per year by his parents, and used to draw this at the house of Mr. Abednego, the banker. One day, when he went to cash a draft for five dollars, the lovely Miss Rebecca Abednego chanced to be in the room. Ah, Lorenzo, Lorenzo ! better for you to have remained at home studying the *Pons Asinorum* ; better still for you to have been at church listening to the soul-stirring discourses of Father Windbeutel ; better for you to have been less learned and more pious : then you would not have been so likely to go astray, or allow your fancy to be inflamed by the charms of wicked Jewesses, that all Christian men should shun like poison.

Here it was Lent season—a holiday in Lent, and Lorenzo von Tisch knew nothing about the matter, and Rebecca Abednego, and her father, were absolutely come to break-fast with him !

But though Lorenzo had forgotten Lent, the citizens of Krähwinkel had not, and especially one Herr Bürcke, the court butcher, to whom Tisch had just dispatched Spitz for a dollar's worth of sausage-meat.

The visits of Tisch to the Jew's house had indeed caused not a little scandal. The student's odd, lonely ways, his neglect of church, his queer little dog that ran of errands for him, had all been talked of by the townspeople, who had come at last to believe that Lorenzo was no less than a magician, and his dog, as he himself said in joke, his familiar spirit. Poor Spitz !—no familiar spirit wert thou ; only a little, faithful, ugly dog—a little dog that Tisch's aunt, Konisgunda, gave to him, who was equally fond of it and him.

Those who know Krähwinkel (and who, I should like to know, is not acquainted with that famous city ?) are aware

that Mr. Bürcke, the court butcher, has his handsome shop in the Schnapps-Gasse, only a few doors from Abednego's banking-house. Mrs. Bürcke is, or used to be, a lady that was very fond of knowing the doings of her neighbours, and passed many hours staring out of her windows, of which the front row gave her a command of the whole of that beautiful street, the Schnapps-Gasse, while from the back the eye ranged over the gardens and summer-houses without the gates of the town, and the great road that goes to Bolkum. Herr Lorenzo's cottage was on this road; and it was by the Bolkum-gate that little Spitz the dog entered with his basket, when he went on his master's errands.

Now, on this day in Lent, it happened that Frau Bürcke was looking out of her windows instead of listening at church to Father Windbeutel, and she saw at eleven o'clock Mr. Israel Löwe, Herr Abednego's valet, porter, coachman, gardener, and cashier, bring round a certain chaise that the banker had taken for a bad debt, into which he stepped in his best snuff-coloured coat, and silk stockings, handing in Miss Rebecca in a neat dress of yellow silk, a blue hat and pink feathers, and a pair of red morocco slippers that set off her beautiful ankle to advantage.

'Odious people!' said Mrs. Bürcke, looking at the pair that Mr. Löwe was driving; 'odious, vulgar horse!' (Herr Bürcke kept only that one on which his lad rode;) 'Roman-nosed beast! I shouldn't wonder but that the horse is a Jew too!'—and she saw the party turn down to the left into Bolkum-Strasse, towards the gate which I have spoken of before.

When Madame Bürcke saw this, she instantly flew from her front window to her back window, and there had a full view of the Bolkum Road, and the Abednego chaise jingling up the same. Mr. Löwe, when they came to the hill, got off the box and walked; Mr. Abednego sat inside and smoked his pipe.

'*Ey, du lieber Himmel!*' screamed out Mrs. Bürcke, 'they have stopped at the necromancer's door!'

It was so that she called the worthy Tisch: and she was perfectly right in saying that the Israelitish cavalcade had stopped at the gate of his cottage; where also appeared Lorenzo, bowing, in his best coat, and offering his arm to lead Miss Rebecca in. Mrs. Bürcke could not see how he

trembled as he performed this work of politeness, or what glances Miss Rebecca shot forth from her great wicked black eyes. Having set down his load, Mr. Israel again mounted his box, and incontinently drove away.

‘Here comes that horrid little dog with the basket,’ continued Mrs. Bürcke, after a few minutes’ more looking out of the window :—and now, is not everything explained relative to Herr Lorenzo Tisch, Miss Rebecca Abednego, and the little dog ?

Mrs. Bürcke hated Spitz : the fact is, he once bit a hole in one of her great, round, mottled arms, which had thrust itself into the basket that Spitz carried for his master’s provisions ; for Mrs. B. was very anxious to know what there was under the napkin. In consequence, therefore, of this misunderstanding between her and the dog, whenever she saw the animal it was Mrs. B.’s wicked custom to salute him with many foul words and curses, and to compass how to do him harm ; for the Frau Hofmetzlerin, as she was called in Krähwinkel, was a lady of great energy and perseverance, and nobody could ever accuse her of forgetting an injury.

The little dog, as she sat meditating evil against him, came trotting down the road, entered as usual by the Bolkum-gate, turned to the right, and by the time Madame Bürcke had descended to the shop, there he was at the door, sure enough, and entered it wagging his tail. It was a holiday in Lent, and the butcher-boys were absent ; Mr. Bürcke himself was abroad ; there was not a single joint of meat in the shop, nor ought there to be at such a season, when all good men eat fish. But how was poor Spitz to know what the season was, or tell what his master himself had forgotten ?

He looked a little shy when he saw only Madame Bürcke in the shop, doubtless remembering his former disagreement with her ; but a sense of duty at last prevailed with him, and he jumped up on his usual place on the counter, laid his basket down, whined, and began flapping the place on which he sat with his tail.

Mrs. Bürcke advanced, and held out her great mottled arm rather fearfully ; he growled, and made her start a little, but did her no harm. She took the paper out of the basket, and read what we have before imparted to the public : viz. :—‘ *Mr. Court Butcher, have the goodness to*

send per bearer a rix-dollar's worth of best sausage-meat, NOT pork.—LORENZ TISCH.' As she read, the dog wagged his tail more violently than before.

A horrible thought entered the bosom of Mrs. Bürcke, as she looked at the dog, and from the dog glanced at her husband's *cleaver*, that hung idly on the wall.

'Sausages in Lent!' said Mrs. Bürcke; 'sausages to be fetched by a dog for that heathen necromancer and that accursed Jew. *He shall* have sausages with a vengeance!' Mrs. Bürcke took down the cleaver, and—

About twenty minutes afterwards Herr Lorenzo Tisch



opened his garden gate, whither he had been summoned by the whining and scratching of his little faithful messenger. Spitz staggered in, laid the basket at his master's feet, licked his hand, and fell down.

'Blesh us, dere'sh something red all along the road!' cried Mr. Abednego.

'Pshaw! papa, never mind that; let's look at the sausages,' said his daughter Rebecca—a sad gormandizer for so young a woman.

Tisch opened the basket, staggered back, and turned quite sick.—In the basket which Spitz had carried so faithfully lay the poor little dog's OWN TAIL!

What took place during the rest of the entertainment, I have never been able or anxious to learn ; but this I know, that there is a single gentleman now living with Madame Konisgunda von Speck, in the beautiful town of Polkwitz, a gentleman, who, if he has one prejudice in the world, has that of hating the Jewish nation—a gentleman who goes to church regularly, and, above all, never eats meat in Lent.

He is followed about by a little dog—a little ugly dog—of which he and Madame Von Speck are outrageously fond ; although, between ourselves, the animal's back is provided with no more tail than a cannon-ball.

DICKENS IN FRANCE

[*Fraser's Magazine*, March, 1842.]

SEEING placarded on the walls a huge announcement that 'NICHOLAS NICKLEBY, ou Les Voleurs de Londres,' was to be performed at the Ambigu-Comique Théâtre on the Boulevard, and having read in the *Journal des Débats* a most stern and ferocious criticism upon the piece in question, and upon poor Monsieur Dickens, its supposed author, it seemed to me by no means unprofitable to lay out fifty sous in the purchase of a stall at the theatre, and to judge with my own eyes of the merits and demerits of the play.

Who does not remember (except those who never saw the drama, and therefore of course cannot be expected to have any notion of it)—who does not, I say, remember the pathetic acting of Mrs. Keeley in the part of Snike, as performed at the Adelphi; the obstinate good humour of Mr. Wilkinson, who, having to represent the brutal Squeers, was, according to his nature, so chuckling, oily, and kind-hearted, that little boys must have thought it a good joke to be flogged by him; finally, the acting of the admirable Yates in the kindred part of Mantalini? Can France, I thought, produce a fop equal to Yates? Is there any vulgarity and assurance on the Boulevard that can be compared to that of which, in the character of Mantalini, he gives a copy so wonderfully close to nature? Never then were fifty sous more cheerfully—nay, eagerly paid, than by your obedient servant.

After China, this is the most ignorant country, thought I, in the whole civilized world (the company was dropping into the theatre, and the musicians were one by one taking their seats); these people are so immensely conceited, that they think the rest of Europe beneath them; and though they have invaded Spain, Italy, Russia, Germany, not one in ten thousand can ask for a piece of bread in the national language of the countries so conquered. But see

the force of genius ; after a time it conquers everything, even the ignorance and conceit of Frenchmen ! The name of Nicholas Nickleby crosses the Channel in spite of them. I shall see honest John Browdie and wicked Ralph once more, honest and wicked in French. Shall we have the Kenwidges, and their uncle, the delightful collector ; and will he, in Portsmouth church, make that famous marriage with Juliana Petowker ? Above all, what will *Mrs.* Nickleby say ?—the famous *Mrs.* Nickleby, who has lain undescribed until Boz seized upon her and brought that great truth to light, and whom yet every man possesses in the bosom of his own family. Are there *Mrs.* Nicklebies—or, to speak more correctly, are there *Mistresses* Nickleby in France ? We shall see all this at the rising of the curtain ; and, hark ! the fiddlers are striking up.

Presently the prompter gives his three heart-thrilling slaps, and the great painted cloth moves upwards : it is always a moment of awe and pleasure. What is coming ? First you get a glimpse of legs and feet ; then suddenly the owners of the limbs in question in steady attitudes, looking as if they had been there one thousand years before ; now behold the landscape, the clouds ; the great curtain vanishes altogether, the charm is dissolved, and the disenchanted performers begin.

ACT I.

You see a court of a school, with great iron bars in front, and a beauteous sylvan landscape beyond. Could you read the writing on the large board over the gate, you would know that the school was the ‘*Paradis des Enfants*,’ kept by Mr. Squeers. Somewhere by that bright river, which meanders through the background, is the castle of the stately Earl of Clarendon—no relation to a late ambassador at Madrid.

His lordship is from home ; but his young and lovely daughter, Miss Annabella, is in Yorkshire, and at this very moment is taking a lesson of French from Mr. Squeers’s *sous-maitre*, Neekolass Neeklbee. Nicholas is, however, no vulgar usher ; he is but lately an orphan ; and his uncle, the rich London banker, Monsieur Ralph, taking charge of the lad’s portionless sister, has procured for Nicholas this place of usher at a school in le Yorksheer.

A rich London banker procuring his nephew a place in a school at eight guineas per annum ! Sure there must be some roguery in this ; and the more so when you know that Monsieur Squeers, the keeper of the academy, was a few years since a vulgar rope-dancer and tumbler at a fair. But, peace ! let these mysteries clear up, as, please Heaven, before five acts are over they will. Meanwhile Nicholas is happy in giving his lessons to the lovely Meess Annabel. Lessons, indeed ! Lessons of what ? Alack, alack ! when two young, handsome, ardent, tender-hearted people pore over the same book, we know what happens, be the book what it may. French or Hebrew, there is always one kind of language in the leaves, as those can tell who have conned them.

Meanwhile, in the absence of his usher, Monsieur Squeers keeps school. But one of his scholars is in the courtyard ; a lad beautifully dressed, fat, clean, and rosy. A gentleman by the name of Browdie, by profession a drover, is with the boy, employed at the moment (for he is at leisure and fond of music) in giving him a lesson on *the clarionet*.

The boy thus receiving lessons is called facetiously by his master *Prospectus*, and why ? Because he is so excessively fat and healthy, and well clothed, that his mere appearance in the courtyard is supposed to entice parents and guardians to place their children in a seminary where the scholars were in such admirable condition.

And here I cannot help observing in the first place, that Squeers exhibiting in this manner a sample-boy, and pretending that the whole stock was like him (whereas they are a miserable, half-starved set), must have been an abominable old scoundrel ; and, secondly (though the observation applies to the French nation merely, and may be considered more as political than general), that, by way of a fat specimen, never was one more unsatisfactory than this. Such a poor shrivelled creature I never saw ; it is like a French fat pig, as lanky as a greyhound ! Both animals give one a thorough contempt for the nation.

John Browdie gives his lesson to Prospectus, who informs him of some of the circumstances narrated above ; and having concluded the lesson, honest John produces a piece of *pudding* for his pupil. Ah, how Prospectus devours it ! for though the only well-fed boy in the school, he is, we regret to say, a gormandizer by disposition.

While Prospectus eats, another of Mr. Squeers's scholars is looking unnoticed on ; another boy, a thousand times more miserable. See yon poor shivering child, trembling over his book in a miserable hutch at the corner of the court ! He is in rags, he is not allowed to live with the other boys ; at play they constantly buffet him, at lesson-time their blunders are visited upon his poor shoulders.

Who is this unhappy boy ? Ten years since a man by the name of Becher brought him to the *Paradis des Enfants* ; and paying in advance five years of his pension, left him under the charge of Monsieur Squeers. No family ever visited the child ; and when at the five years' end the *instituteur* applied at the address given him by Becher for the further payment of his pupil's expenses, Monsieur Squeers found that Becher had grossly deceived him, that no such persons existed, and that no money was consequently forthcoming, hence the misfortunes which afterwards befell the hapless orphan. None cared for him—none knew him, 'tis possible that even the name he went by was fictitious. That name was Smike, pronounced Smeek.

Poor Smeek ! he had, however, found one friend,—the kind-hearted *sous-maitre* Neeklbee—who gave him half of his own daily pittance of bread and pudding, encouraged him to apply to his books, and defended him as much as possible from the assaults of the schoolboys and Monsieur Squeers.

John Browdie had just done giving his lesson of clarionet to Prospectus, when Neeklbee arrived at the school. There was a difference between John and Nicholas ; for the former, seeing the young usher's frequent visits at Clarendon Castle, foolishly thought he was enamoured of Meess Jenny, the *fermier's* daughter, on whom John too had fixed an eye of affection. Silly John ! Nicholas's heart was fixed (hopelessly as the young man thought) upon higher objects. However, the very instant that Nickleby entered the courtyard of the school, John took up his stick and set off for London, whither he was bound, with a drove of oxen.

Nickleby had not arrived a whit too soon to protect his poor friend Smeek ; all the boys were called into the courtyard by Monsieur Squarrs, and made to say their lessons ; when it came to poor Smeek's turn, the timid lad trembled, hesitated, and could not do his spelling.

Inflamed with fury, old Squarrs rushed forward, and would have assommé his pupil, but human nature could

bear this tyranny no longer. Nickleby, stepping forward, defended the poor prostrate child; and when Squeers raised his stick to strike—pouf! pif! un, deux, trois, et là!—Monsieur Nicholas flanquéed him several coups de poing, and sent him bientôt grovelling à terre.

You may be sure that there was now a pretty halloing among the boys; all jumped, kicked, thumped, bumped, and scratched their unhappy master (and serve him right, too!), and when they had finished their fun, vlan! flung open the gates of the Infants' Paradise and ran away home.

Neekbee, seeing what he had done, had nothing left but to run away too: he penned a hasty line to his lovely pupil Miss Annabel, to explain that though his departure was sudden his honour was safe, and, seizing his stick, quitted the school.

There was but one pupil left in it, and he, poor soul, knew not whither to go. But when he saw Nicholas, his sole friend, departing, he mustered courage, and then made a step forward—and then wondered if he dared—and then, when Nicholas was at a little distance from him, ran, ran as if his life (as indeed it did) depended upon it.

This is the picture of Neekbee and poor Smeek. They are both dressed in the English fashion, and you must fancy the curtain falling amidst thunders of applause. [*End of Act I.*



'Ah, ah, ah! ouf, pouf.'
 —'Dieu, qu'il fait chaud!'
 'Orgeat, limonade, bière!'—'*L'Entr'acte*, journal de tous les spectacles!'—'*LA MARSEILLAI-AI-AISE!*'—with such cries from pit and boxes the public wiles away the weary ten minutes between the acts. The three *bonnes* in the front boxes, who had been escorted by a gentleman in

a red cap, and jacket, and ear-rings, begin sucking oranges with great comfort, while their friend amuses himself with a piece of barley-sugar. The *petite-maitresse* in the private box smooths her *bandeaux* of hair and her little trim, white cuffs, and looks at her *chiffons*. The friend of the tight black velvet spencer, meanwhile, pulls his yellow kid gloves tighter on his hands, and looks superciliously round the house with his double-glass. Fourteen people, all smelling of smoke, all bearded, and all four feet high, pass over your body to their separate stalls. The prompter gives his thumps, whack—whack—whack! the music begins again, the curtain draws, and, lo! we have

ACT II.

The tavern of Les Armes du Roi appears to be one of the most frequented in the city of London. It must be in the Yorkshire road, that is clear; for the first person whom we see there is John Browdie; to him presently comes Prospectus, then Neeklbee, then poor Smeek, each running away individually from the *Paradis des Enfants*.

It is likewise at this tavern that the great banker Ralph does his business, and lets you into a number of his secrets. Hither, too, comes Milor Clarendon,—a handsome peer, forsooth, but a sad reprobate I fear. Sorrow has driven him to these wretched courses: ten years since he lost a son, a lovely child of six years of age; and, hardened by the loss, he has taken to gambling, to the use of the *vins de France* which take the reason prisoner, and to other excitements still more criminal. He has cast his eyes upon the lovely Kate Nickleby (he, the father of Miss Annabel!), and asks the banker to sup with him, to lend him ten thousand pounds, and to bring his niece with him. With every one of these requests the capitalist promises to comply: the money he produces forthwith; the lady he goes to fetch. Ah, milor! beware—beware, your health is bad, your property is ruined,—death and insolvency stare you in the face,—but what cares Lor Clarendon? He is desperate: he orders a splendid repast in a private apartment, and while they are getting it ready, he and the young lords of his acquaintance sit down and crack a bottle in the coffee-room. A gallant set of gentlemen truly, all in short coats with capes to them, in tights and

Hessian boots, such as our nobility are in the custom of wearing.

'I bet you cinq cents guinées, Lor Beef,' says Milor Clarendon (whom the wine has begun to excite), 'that I will have the lovely Kate Nicklbee at supper with us to-night.'

'Done!' says Lor Beef. But why starts yon stranger who has just come into the hotel? Why, forsooth? because he is Nicholas Nickleby, Kate's brother; and a pretty noise he makes when he hears of his lordship's project!

'You have Meess Neeklbee at your table, sir? You are a liar!'

All the lords start up.

'Who is this very strange person?' says Milor Clarendon, as cool as a cucumber.

'Dog! give me your name!' shouts Nicholas.

'Ha! ha! ha!' says my lord, scornfully.

'John,' says Nickleby, seizing hold of a waiter, 'tell me that man's name.'

John the waiter looks frightened, and hums and ha's, when, at the moment, who should walk in but Mr. Ralph the banker, and his niece.

Ralph. 'Nicholas!—confusion!'

Kate. 'My brother!'

Nicholas. 'Avaunt, woman! Tell me, sirrah, by what right you bring my sister into such company, and who is the villain to whom you have presented her?'

Ralph. 'Lord Clarendon.'

Nicholas. 'The father of Meess Annabel? Gracious Heaven!'

What followed now need not be explained. The young lords and the banker retire abashed to their supper, while



Meess Kate, and SMIKE, who has just arrived, fall into the arms of Nicholas.

Such, ladies and gentlemen, is the second act, rather feeble in interest, and not altogether probable in action. That five people running away from Yorkshire should all come to the same inn in London, arriving within five minutes of each other,—that Mr. Ralph, the great banker, should make the hotel his place of business, and openly confess in the coffee-room to his ex-agent Becher that he had caused Becher to make away with or murder the son of Lord Clarendon,—finally, that Lord Clarendon himself, with an elegant town mansion, should receive his distinguished guests in a tavern, of not the first respectability,—all these points may, perhaps, strike the critic from their extreme improbability. But, bless your soul ! if *these* are improbabilities, what will you say to the revelations of the

THIRD ACT.

That scoundrel Squarrs before he kept the school was, as we have seen, a tumbler and *saltimbanque*, and, as such, member of the great fraternity of cadgers, beggars, *gueux*, thieves, that have their club in London. It is held in immense Gothic vaults under ground : here the beggars consort their plans, divide their spoil, and hold their orgies.

In returning to London Monsieur Squarrs instantly resumes his acquaintance with his old comrades, who appoint him, by the all-powerful interest of a *peculiar person*, head of the community of cadgers.

That person is no other than the banker Ralph, who, in secret, directs this godless crew, visits their haunts, and receives from them a boundless obedience. A villain himself, he has need of the aid of villany. He pants for vengeance against his nephew, he has determined that his niece shall fall a prey to Milor Clarendon,—nay more, he has a dark suspicion that SMIKE—the orphan boy—the homeless fugitive from Yorkshire—is no other than the child who ten years ago—but, hush !

Where is his rebellious nephew and those whom he protects ? The quick vigilance of Ralph soon discovered them ; Nicholas, having taken the name of Edward Browne,

was acting at a theatre in the neighbourhood of the Thames. Haste, Squarrs, take a couple of trusty beggars with you, and hie thee to Wapping; seize young Smike and carry him to Cadger's Cavern,—haste, then! The mind shudders to consider what is to happen.

In Nicholas's room at the theatre we find his little family assembled, and with them honest John Browdie, who has forgotten his part on learning that Nicholas was attached, not to the *fermière*, but to the mistress; to them comes—gracious heavens!—Meess Annabel. 'Fly,' says she, 'fly! I have overheard a plot concocted between my father and your uncle; the sheriff is to seize you for the abduction of Smeeke and the assault upon Squarrs,' &c. &c. &c.

In short, it is quite impossible to describe this act, so much is there done in it. Lord Clarendon learns that he has pledged his life interest in his estates to Ralph.

His lordship *dies*, and Ralph seizes a paper, which proves beyond a doubt that young Smike is no other than Clarendon's long-lost son.

L'infâme Squarrs with his satellites carry off the boy; Browdie pitches Squarrs into the river; the sheriff carries Nickleby to prison; and VICE TRIUMPHS in the person of the odious Ralph. But vice does not always triumph; wait awhile and you will see. For in the

FOURTH ACT

John Browdie, determined to rescue his two young friends, follows Ralph like his shadow; he dogs him to a rendezvous of the beggars, and overhears all his conversation with Squarrs. The boy is in the Cadger's Cavern, hidden a thousand feet below the Thames; there is to be a grand jollification among the rogues that night—a dance and a feast. 'I,' says John Browdie, '*will be there.*' And, wonderful to say, who should pass but his old friend Prospectus, to whom he gave lessons on the clarionet.

Prospectus is a cadger now, and is to play his clarionet that night at Cadger's Hall. Browdie will join him,—he is dressed up like a blind beggar, and strange sights, Heaven knows, meet his eyes in Cadger's Hall.

Here they come trooping in by scores,—the halt and the lame, black sweepers, one-legged fiddlers, the climber mots, the fly-fakers, the kedgoree coves,—in a word, the

rogues of London, to their Gothic hall, a thousand miles below the level of the sea. Squarrs is their nominal head; but their real leader is the tall man yonder in the black mask, he whom nobody knows but Browdie, who has found him out at once,—’tis Ralph!

‘Bring out the prisoner,’ says the black mask; ‘he has tried to escape—he has broken his oaths to the cadgers, let him meet his punishment.’

And without a word more, what do these cadgers do? They take poor Smike and *bury him alive*; down he goes into the vault, a stone is rolled over him, the cadgers go away,—so much for Smike.

But in the meantime Master Browdie has not been idle. He has picked the pocket of one of the cadgers of a portfolio containing papers that prove Smike to be Lord Clarendon beyond a doubt; he lags behind until all the cadgers are gone, and with the help of Nicholas (who, by the by, has found his way somehow into the place), he pushes away the stone, and brings the fainting boy to the world.

These things are improbable you certainly may say, but are they impossible? If they are possible, then they may come to pass; if they may come to pass then, they may be supposed to come to pass: and why should they not come to pass? That is my argument: let us pass on to the

FIFTH ACT.

Aha! Master Ralph, you think you will have it all your own way, do you? The lands of Clarendon are yours, provided there is no male heir, and you have done for *him*. The peerage, to be sure (by the laws of England), is to pass to the husband of Meess Annabella. Will she marry Ralph, or not? Yes: then well and good; he is an earl for the future and the father of a new race of Clarendon. No: then, in order to spell her still more, he has provided amongst the beggars a lad who is to personate the young mislaid Lord Clarendon, who is to come armed with certain papers that make his right unquestionable, and who will be a creature of Ralph’s, to be used or cast away at will.

Ralph pops the question; the lady repels him with

scorn. 'Quit the house, Meess,' says he; 'it is not yours, but mine. Give up that vain title which you have adopted since your papa's death; you are no countess,—your brother lives. Ho! John, Thomas, Samuel! introduce his lordship, the Comte de Clarendon.'

And who slips in? Why, in a handsome new dress, in the English fashion, SMIKE, to be sure—the boy whom Ralph has murdered—the boy who had risen from the tomb—the boy who had miraculously discovered the papers in Cadger's Hall and (by some underhand work that went on behind the scenes, which I don't pretend to understand) had substituted himself for the substitute which that wicked banker had proposed to bring forward! A rush of early recollections floods the panting heart of the young boy. Can it be? Yes—no; sure these halls are familiar to him? That conservatory, has he not played with the flowers there—played with his blessed mother at his side? That portrait! Stop! a—a—a—a—ah! it is—it is my sister Anna—Anna—bella!

Fancy the scene as the two young creatures rush with a scream into each other's arms. Fancy John Browdie's hilarity: he jumps for joy, and throws off his beggar's cloak and beard. Nicholas clasps his hands, and casts his fine eyes heavenward. But, above all, fancy the despair of that cursed banker Ralph as he sees his victim risen from the grave, and all his hopes dashed down into it. O Heaven, Thy hand is here! How must the banker then have repented of his bargain with the late Lord Clarendon, and that he had not had his lordship's life insured! Perdition! to have been out-tricked by a boy and a country boor! Is there no hope? . . .

Hope? Psha! man, thy reign of vice is over,—it is the fifth act. Already the people are beginning to leave the house, and never more again canst thou expect to lift thy head.

'Monsieur Ralph,' Browdie whispers, 'after your pretty doings in Cadger's Hall, had you not best be thinking of leaving the country? As Nicholas Nickleby's uncle, I would fain not see you, crick! You understand?' (pointing to his jugular).

'I do,' says Ralph, gloomily, 'and will be off in two hours.' And Lord SMIKE takes honest Browdie by one hand, gently pressing Kate's little fingers with the other,

and the sheriff, and the footmen, and attendants form a tableau, and the curtain begins to fall, and the blushing Annabel whispers to happy Nicholas,—‘Ah! my friend, I can give up with joy to my brother *ma couronne de comtesse*. What care I for rank or name with you? the name that I love above all others is that of LADY ANNABEL NICKLEBY.’

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

The musicians have hurried off long before this. In one instant the stage lamps go out, and you see fellows starting forward to cover the boxes with canvas. Up goes the chandelier amongst the gods and goddesses painted on the ceiling. Those in the galleries, meanwhile, bellow out ‘SAINT-ERNEST!’ he it is who acted John Browdie. Then there is a yell of ‘SMEEK! SMEEK!’ Blushing and bowing, Madame Prosper comes forward; by Heavens! a pretty woman, with tender eyes and a fresh, clear voice. Next the gods call for ‘CHILLY!’ who acted the villain: but by this time you are bustling and struggling among the crowd in the lobbies, where there is the usual odour of garlic and tobacco. Men in sabots come tumbling down from the galleries; cries of ‘*Auguste, solo! Eugénie! prends ton parapluie;*’ ‘*Monsieur, vous me marchez sur les pieds,*’ are heard in the crowd, over which the brazen helmets of the Pompier’s tower are shining. A cabman in the Boulevard, who opens his vehicle eagerly as you pass by, growls dreadful oaths when, seated inside, you politely request him to drive to the Barrière de l’Étoile. ‘*Ah, ces Anglais,*’ says he, ‘*ça demeure dans les déserts—dans les déserts, grand Dieu! avec les loups; ils prennent leur beautyfine thé avec leurs tartines le soir, et puis ils se couchent dans les déserts, ma parole d’honneur; comme des Arabes.*’

If the above explanation of the plot of the new piece of *Nicholas Nickleby* has appeared intolerably long to those few persons who have perused it, I can only say for their comfort that I have not told one half of the real plot of the piece in question; nay, very likely have passed over all the most interesting part of it. There, for instance, was the assassination of the virtuous villain Becher, the dying scene with my lord, the manner in which Nicholas got into the Cadger’s Cave, and got out again. Have I breathed a syllable upon any of these points? No;

and never will to my dying day. The imperfect account of *Nicholas Nickleby* given above is all that the most impatient reader (let him have fair warning) can expect to hear from his humble servant. Let it be sufficient to know that the piece in itself contains a vast number of beauties entirely passed over by the unworthy critic, and only to be appreciated by any gentleman who will take the trouble to step across the Channel, and thence from his hotel to the ambiguously-comic theatre. And let him make haste, too; for who knows what may happen? Human life is proverbially short. Theatrical pieces bloom and fade like the flowers of the field, and very likely long before this notice shall appear in print (as let us heartily, from mercenary considerations, pray that it will), the drama of *Nicholas Nickleby* may have disappeared altogether from the world's ken, like Carthage, Troy, Swallow Street, the Marylebone bank, Babylon, and other fond magnificences elevated by men, and now forgotten and prostrate.

As for the worthy Boz, it will be seen that *his* share in the piece is perfectly insignificant, and that he has no more connexion with the noble geniuses who invented the drama than a pig has with a gold-laced hat that a nobleman may have hung on it, or a starting-post on the race-course with some magnificent thousand-guinea fiery horses who may choose to run from it. How poor do his writings appear after those of the Frenchman! How feeble, mean, and destitute of imagination! *He* never would have thought of introducing six lords, an ex-kidnapper, a great banker, an idiot, a schoolmaster, his usher, a cattle-driver, coming for the most part a couple of hundred miles, in order to lay open all their secrets in the coffee-room of the King's Arms hotel! He never could have invented the great subterraneous cavern, *cimetière et salle de bal*, as Jules Janin calls it! The credit of all this falls upon the French adaptors of Monsieur Dickens's romance; and so it will be advisable to let the public know.

But as the French play-writers are better than Dickens, being incomparably more imaginative and poetic, so, in progression, is the French critic, Jules Janin, above named, a million times superior to the French playwrights, and, after Janin, Dickens disappears altogether. He is cut up, disposed of, done for. J. J. has hacked him into small

pieces, and while that wretched romancer is amusing himself across the Atlantic, and fancying, perhaps, that he is a popular character, his business has been done for ever and ever in Europe. What matters that he is read by millions in England and billions in America? that everybody who understands English has a corner in his heart for him? The great point is, *what does Jules Janin think?* and that we shall hear presently; for though I profess the greatest admiration for Mr. Dickens, yet there can be no reason why one should deny oneself the little pleasure of acquainting him that *some* ill-disposed persons in the world are inclined to abuse him. Without this privilege what is friendship good for?

Who is Janin? He is the critic of France. J. J., in fact,—the man who writes a weekly *feuilleton* in the *Journal des Débats* with such indisputable brilliancy and wit, and such a happy mixture of effrontery, and honesty, and poetry, and impudence, and falsehood, and impertinence, and good feeling, that one can't fail to be charmed with the compound, and to look rather eagerly for the Monday's paper;—Jules Janin is the man, who, not knowing a single word of the English language, as he actually professes in the preface, *has helped to translate the Sentimental Journey*. He is the man who, when he was married (in a week when news were slack no doubt), actually *criticized his own marriage ceremony*, letting all the public see the proof-sheets of his bridal, as was the custom among certain ancient kings, I believe. In fact, a more modest, honest, unassuming, blushing, truth-telling, gentlemanlike J. J. it is impossible to conceive.

Well, he has fallen foul of Monsieur Dickens, this fat French moralist; he says Dickens is *immodest*, and Jules cannot abide immodesty; and a great and conclusive proof this is upon a question which the two nations have been in the habit of arguing, namely, which of the two is the purer in morals? and may be argued clear thus:—

1. We in England are accustomed to think Dickens modest, and allow our children to peruse his works.

2. In France the man who wrote the history of *The Dead Donkey and the Guillotined Woman*,¹ and afterwards

¹ Some day the writer meditates a great and splendid review of J. J.'s work.

his own epithalamium in the newspaper, is revolted by Dickens.

3. Therefore Dickens *must* be immodest, and grossly immodest, otherwise a person so confessedly excellent as J. J. would never have discovered the crime.

4. And therefore it is pretty clear that the French morals are of a much higher order than our own, which remark will apply to persons and books, and all the relations of private and public life.

Let us now see how our fat Jules attacks Dickens. His remarks on him begin in the following jocular way :—

THÉÂTRE DE L'AMBIGU-COMIQUE.

Nicolas Nickleby, Mélodrame, en Six Actes.

A genoux devant celui-là qui s'appelle Charles Dickens ! à genoux ! Il a accompli à lui seul ce que n'ont pu faire à eux deux lord Byron et Walter Scott ! Joignez-y, si vous voulez, Pope et Milton et tout ce que la littérature anglaise a produit de plus solennel et de plus charmant. Charles Dickens ! mais il n'est question que de lui en Angleterre. Il en est la gloire, et la joie, et l'orgueil ! Savez-vous combien d'acheteurs possède ce Dickens ; j'ai dit *d'acheteurs*, de gens qui tirent leur argent de leur bourse pour que cet argent passe de leur main dans la main du libraire ?—Dix mille acheteurs. Dix mille ? que disons-nous, dix mille ! vingt mille !—Vingt mille ? Quoi ! vingt mille acheteurs ?—Eh donc, vingt mille ! Quarante mille acheteurs.—Eh quoi ! il a trouvé quarante mille acheteurs, vous vous moquez de nous, sans doute ?—Oui, mon brave homme, on se moque de vous, car ce n'est pas vingt mille et quarante mille et soixante mille acheteurs qu'a rencontrés ce Charles Dickens, c'est cent mille acheteurs. Cent mille, pas un de moins. Cent mille esclaves, cent mille tributaires, cent mille ! Et nos grands écrivains modernes s'estiment bien heureux et bien fiers quand leur livre le plus vanté parvient, au bout de six mois de célébrité, à son huitième cent !

There is raillery for you ! there is a knowledge of English literature,—of ' Pope et Milton, si solennel et si charmant ! ' Milton, above all ; his little comédie *Samson l'Agoniste* is one of the gayest and most graceful trifles that ever was acted on the stage. And to think that Dickens has sold more copies of his work than the above two eminent hommes-de-lettres, and Scott and Byron into the bargain ! It is a fact, and J. J. vouches for it. To be sure, J. J. knows no more of English literature than I do of hieroglyphics,—to be sure, he has not one word of English.

N'importe : he has had the advantage of examining the books of Mr. Dickens's publishers, and has discovered that they sell of Boz's works '*cent mille, pas un de moins*.' Janin will not allow of one less. Can you answer numbers ? And there are our grands écrivains modernes, who are happy if they sell eight hundred in six months. Byron and Scott doubtless, 'le solennel Pope, et le charmant Milton,' as well as other geniuses not belonging to the three kingdoms. If a man is an arithmetician as well as a critic, and we join together figures of speech and Arabic numerals, there is no knowing what he may not prove.

'Or,' continues J. J. :—

Or, parmi les chefs-d'œuvre de sa façon que dévore l'Angleterre, ce Charles Dickens a produit un gros mélodrame en deux gros volumes, intitulé *Nicolas Nickleby*. Ce livre a été traduit chez nous par un homme de beaucoup d'esprit, qui n'est pas fait pour ce triste métier-là. Si vous saviez ce que peut être un pareil chef-d'œuvre, certes vous prendriez en pitié les susdits cent mille souscripteurs de Charles Dickens. Figurez-vous donc un amas d'inventions puériles, où l'horrible et le naïf se donnent la main, dans une ronde infernale ; ici passent en riant de bonnes gens si bons qu'ils en sont tout-à-fait bêtes ; plus loin bondissent et blasphèment toutes sortes de bandits, de fripons, de voleurs et de misérables si affreux qu'on ne sait pas comment pourrait vivre, seulement vingt-quatre heures, une société ainsi composée. C'est le plus nauséabond mélange qu'on puisse imaginer de lait chaud et de bière tournée, d'œufs frais et de bœuf salé, de haillons et d'habits brodés, d'écus d'or et de gros sous, de roses et de pissenlits. On se bat, on s'embrasse, on s'injurie, on s'enivre, on meurt de faim. Les filles de la rue et les lords de la Chambre haute, les porte-faix et les poètes, les écoliers et les voleurs, se promènent, bras dessus bras dessous, au milieu de ce tohu-bohu insupportable. Aimez-vous la fumée de tabac, l'odeur de l'ail, le goût du porc frais, l'harmonie que fait un plat d'étain frappé contre une casserole de cuivre non énamé ? Lisez-moi consciencieusement ce livre de Charles Dickens. Quelles plaies ! quelles pustules ! et que de saintes vertus ! Ce Dickens a réuni en bloc toutes les descriptions de Guzman d'Alfarache et tous les rêves de Grandisson. Oh ! qu'êtes-vous devenus, vous les lectrices tant soit peu prudes des romans de Walter Scott ? Oh ! qu'a-t-on fait de vous, les lectrices animées de *Don Juan* et de *Lara* ? O vous, les chastes enthousiastes de la *Clarisse Harlowe*, voilez-vous la face de honte ! A cent mille exemplaires le Charles Dickens !

To what a pitch of *dévergondage* must the English ladies have arrived, when a fellow who can chronicle his own marriage, and write *The Dead Donkey and the Guillotined*

Woman,—when even a man like that, whom nobody can accuse of being squeamish, is obliged to turn away with disgust at their monstrous immodesty !

J. J. is not difficult ; a little harmless gallantry and trifling with the seventh commandment does not offend him,—far from it. Because there are no love-intrigues in Walter Scott, Jules says that Scott's readers are *tant soit peu prudes* ! There *ought* to be, in fact, in life and in novels, a little, pleasant, gentlemanlike, anti-seventh-commandment excitement. Read *The Dead Donkey and the Guillotined Woman*, and you will see how the thing may be agreeably and genteelly done. See what he says of *Clarissa*,—it is *chaste* ; of *Don Juan*,—it is not indecent, it is not immoral, it is only ANIMÉE ! Animée ! O ciel ! what a word ! Could any but a Frenchman have had the grace to hit on it ? 'Animation' our Jules can pardon ; prudery he can excuse, in his good-humoured, contemptuous way ; but Dickens—this Dickens,—oh, fie ! And, perhaps, there never was a more succinct, complete, elegant, just, and satisfactory account given of a book than that by our friend Jules of *Nicholas Nickleby*. 'It is the most disgusting mixture imaginable of warm milk and sour beer, of fresh eggs and salt beef, of rags and laced clothes, of gold crowns and coppers, of rose and dandelions.'

There is a receipt for you ! or take another, which is quite as pleasant :—

II

"The fumes of tobacco, the odour of garlic, the taste of fresh pork, the harmony made by striking a pewter plate against an untinned copper saucepan. Read me conscientiously this book of Charles Dickens ; what sores ! what pustules !' &c.

Try either mixture (and both are curious),—for fresh pork is an ingredient in one, salt beef in another ; tobacco and garlic in receipt No. 2 agreeably take the places of warm milk and sour beer in formula No. 1 ; and whereas, in the second prescription, a pewter plate and *untinned* copper saucepan (what a devilish satire in that epithet *untinned* !), a gold crown and a few halfpence, answer in the first. Take either mixture, and the result is a Dickens. Hang thyself, thou unhappy writer of *Pickwick* ; or, blushing at this

exposition of thy faults, turn red man altogether, and build a wigwam in a wilderness, and live with 'possums up gum-trees. Fresh pork and warm milk ; sour beer and salt b—— Faugh ! how could you serve us so atrociously ?

And this is one of the '*chefs-d'œuvre de sa façon que dévore l'Angleterre.*' The beastly country ! How Jules lashes the islanders with the sting of that epigram—*chefs-d'œuvre de leur façon !*

Look you, J. J., it is time that such impertinence should cease. Will somebody—out of three thousand literary men in France, there are about three who have a smattering of the English—will some one of the three explain to J. J. the enormous folly and falsehood of all that the fellow has been saying about Dickens and English literature generally ? We have in England literary *chefs-d'œuvre de notre façon*, and are by no means ashamed to devour the same. 'Le charmant Milton' was not, perhaps, very skilled for making epigrams and *chansons-à-boire*, but, after all, was a person of merit, and of his works have been sold considerably more than eight hundred copies. 'Le solennel Pope' was a writer not undeserving of praise. There must have been something worthy in Shakespeare,—for his name has penetrated even to France, where he is not unfrequently called 'le Sublime Williams.' Walter Scott, though a prude, as you say, and not having the agreeable *laisser-aller* of the author of the *Dead Donkey*, &c., could still turn off a romance pretty creditably. He and 'le Sublime Williams' between them have turned your French literature topsy-turvy ; and many a live donkey of your crew is trying to imitate their paces and their roars, and to lord it like those dead lions. These men made *chefs-d'œuvre de notre façon*, and we are by no means ashamed to acknowledge them.

But what right have you, O blundering ignoramus ! to pretend to judge them and their works,—you, who might as well attempt to give a series of lectures upon the literature of the Hottentots, and are as ignorant of English as the author of the *Random Recollections* ? Learn modesty, Jules ; listen to good advice ; and when you say to other persons, *lisez-moi ce livre consciencieusement*, at least do the same thing, O critic ! before you attempt to judge and arbitrate.

And I am ready to take an affidavit in the matter of this

criticism of *Nicholas Nickleby*, that the translator of Sterne, who does not know English, has not read Boz in the original, —has not even read him in the translation, and slanders him out of pure invention. Take these concluding opinions of J. J. as a proof of the fact :—

De ce roman de *Nicholas Nickleby* a été tiré le mélodrame qui va suivre. Commencez d'abord par entasser les souterrains sur les ténèbres, le vice sur le sang, le mensonge sur l'injure, *l'adultère sur l'inceste*, battez-moi tout ce mélange, et vous verrez ce que vous allez voir.

Dans un comté anglais, dans une école, ou plutôt dans une horrible prison habitée par le froid et la faim, un nommé Squeers entraîne, sous prétexte de les élever dans la belle discipline, tous les enfants qu'on lui confie. Ce misérable Squeers spéculé tout simplement sur la faim, sur la soif, sur les habits de ces pauvres petits. On n'entend que le bruit des verges, les soupirs des battus, les cris des battans, les blasphèmes du maître. C'est affreux à lire et à voir. Surtout ce qui fait peur (je parle du livre en question), c'est la misère d'un pauvre petit nommé Smike, dont cet affreux Squeers est le bourreau. Quand parut le livre de Charles Dickens, on raconte que plus d'un maître de pension de l'Angleterre se récria contre la calomnie. Mais, juste ciel ! si la cent millième partie d'une pareille honte était possible ; s'il était vrai qu'un seul marchand de chair humaine ainsi bâti pût exister de l'autre côté du détroit, ce serait le déshonneur d'une nation tout entière. Et si en effet le chose est impossible, que venez-vous donc nous conter, que le roman, tout comme la comédie, est la peinture des mœurs ?

Or ce petit malheureux couvert de haillons et de plaies, le jouet de M. Squeers, c'est tout simplement le fils unique de Lord Clarendon, un des plus grands seigneurs de l'Angleterre. Voilà justement ce que je disais tout à l'heure. Dans ces romans qui sont le rebut d'une imagination en délire, il n'y a pas de milieu. Ou bien vous êtes le dernier des mendiants chargés d'une besace vide, ou bien, salut à vous ! vous êtes duc et pair du royaume et chevalier de la Jarretière ! Ou le manteau royal ou le haillon. Quelquefois, pour varier la thèse, on vous met par dessus vos haillons le manteau de pourpre.—Votre tête est pleine de vermine, à la bonne heure ! mais laissez faire le romancier, il posera tout à l'heure sur vos immondes cheveux, la couronne ducale. Ainsi procèdent M. Dickens et le Capitaine Marryat et tous les autres.

Here we have a third receipt for the confection of *Nicholas Nickleby*,—darkness and caverns, vice and blood, incest and adultery, '*batter-mois tout ça*,' and the thing is done. Considering that Mr. Dickens has not said a word about darkness, about caverns, about blood (further than a little harmless claret drawn from Squeers's nose), about the two

other crimes mentioned by J. J.,—is it not *de luxe* to put them into the Nickleby-receipt ? Having read the romances of his own country, and no others, J. J. thought he was safe, no doubt, in introducing the last-named ingredients ; but in England the people is still *tant soit peu prudes*, and will have none such fare. In what a luxury of filth, too, does this delicate critic indulge ! *votre tête est pleine de vermine* (a flattering supposition for the French reader, by the way, and remarkable for its polite propriety). Your head is in this condition ; but never mind ; let the romancer do his work, and he will presently place upon *your filthy hair* (kind again) the ducal coronet. This is the way with Monsieur Dickens, Captain Marryat, and *the others*.

With whom, in Heaven's name ? What has poor Dickens ever had to do with ducal crowns, or with the other ornaments of the kind which Monsieur Jules distributes to his friends ? Tell lies about men, friend Jules, if you will, but not *such* lies. See, for the future, that they have a greater likelihood about them ; and try, at least when you are talking of propriety and decency of behaviour, to have your words somewhat more cleanly, and your own manners as little offensive as possible.

And with regard to the character of Squeers, the impossibility of it, and the consequent folly of placing such a portrait in a work that pretends to be a painting of manners, that, too, is a falsehood like the rest. Such a disgrace to human nature not only existed, but existed in J. J.'s country of France. Who does not remember the history of the Boulogne schoolmaster, a year since, whom the newspapers called the ' French Squeers ' ; and about the same time, in the neighbourhood of Paris, there was a case still more atrocious, of a man and his wife who farmed some score of children, subjected them to ill-treatment so horrible, that only J. J. himself, in his nastiest fit of indignation, could describe it ; and ended by murdering one or two, and starving all. The whole story was in the *Débats*, J. J.'s own newspaper, where the accomplished critic may read it.

SULTAN STORK

BEING THE ONE THOUSAND AND SECOND NIGHT

Translated from the Persian

By MAJOR G. O'G. GAHAGAN, H.E.I.C.S.

[*Ainsworth's Magazine*, February and March, 1842.]

PART THE FIRST—THE MAGIC POWDER

‘AFTER those long wars,’ began Scheherazade, as soon as her husband had given the accustomed signal, ‘after those long wars in Persia, which ended in the destruction of the ancient and monstrous Ghebir, or fire-worship, in that country, and the triumph of our holy religion : for though, my lord, the Persians are Soonies by creed, and not followers of Omar, as every true believer in the Prophet ought to be, nevertheless—’

‘A truce to your nevertheless, madam,’ interrupted the Sultan, ‘I want to hear a story, and not a controversy.’

‘Well, sir ; after the expulsion of the Ahrimanians, King Abdulraman governed Persia worthily until he died after a surfeit of peaches, and left his throne to his son Mushook, or the Beautiful,—a title by the way,’ remarked Scheherazade, blushing, and casting down her lovely eyes, ‘which ought at present to belong to your majesty.’

Although the Sultan only muttered, ‘Stuff and nonsense, get along with you,’ it was evident by the blush in the royal countenance, and the smile which lightened up the black waves of the imperial beard, as a sunbeam does the sea, that his majesty was pleased, and that the storm was about to disappear. Scheherazade continued :—

‘Mushook, ascending the throne, passed honourably the first year of his reign in perfecting the work so happily begun by his royal father. He caused a general slaughter of all the Ghebirs in his land to take place, not only of the royal family, but of the common sort ; nor of the latter did there

remain any unkilld (if I may coin such a word) or unconverted ; and, as to the former, they were extirpated root and branch, with the exception of one most dogged enchanter and Ahrimanian, Ghuzroo by name, who, with his son Ameen Adawb, managed to escape out of Persia, and fled to India, where still existed some remnants of their miserably superstitious race. But Bombay is a long way from Persia, and at the former place it was that Ghuzroo and his son took refuge, giving themselves up to their diabolical enchantments and worship, and calling themselves King and Prince of Persia. For them, however, their plans and their pretensions, King Mushook little cared, often singing, in allusion to them, those well-known verses of Hafiz :—

‘Buldoo says that he is the rightful owner of the rice-field,
And declares that the lamb is his undisputed property.
Brag, O Buldoo, about your rights and your possessions ;
But the lamb and rice are his who dines on the pilau.’

The Sultan could hardly contain himself for laughing at this admirable epigram, and, without further interruption, Scheherazade continued her story.

‘King Mushook was then firmly established on his throne, and had for his vizier that famous and worthy statesman Munsoor ; one of the ugliest and oldest, but also one of the wisest of men, and attached beyond everything to the Mushook dynasty, though his teeth had been knocked out by the royal slipper.’

‘And, no doubt, Mushook served him right,’ observed the Sultan.

‘Though his teeth had been knocked out, yet wisdom and persuasion ever hung on his lips ; though one of his eyes, in a fit of royal indignation, had been closed for ever, yet no two eyes in all the empire were as keen as his remaining ball ; he was, in a word, the very best and honestest of viziers, as fat and merry, too, as he was wise and faithful.

‘One day as Shah Mushook was seated after dinner in his beautiful garden-pavilion at Teheran, sick of political affairs, which is no wonder,—sick even of the beautiful houris who had been dancing before him to the sound of lutes and mandolins—tired of the jokes and antics of his buffoons and story-tellers,—let me say at once dyspeptic, and in a shocking ill humour ; old Munsoor (who had already had the royal pipe and slippers flung half a dozen times at

his head), willing by any means to dissipate his master's ill will, lighted in the outer courts of the palace, as he was hying disconsolately home, upon an old pedlar-woman, who was displaying her wares to a crowd of wondering persons and palace servants, and making them die with laughing at her jokes.

'The vizier drew near, heard her jokes,¹ and examined her wares, which were extraordinarily beautiful, and determined to conduct her into the august presence of the king.

'Mushook was so pleased with her stock-in-trade, that, like a royal and generous prince, he determined to purchase her whole pack, box, trinkets, and all; giving her own price for them. So she yielded up her box, only taking out of one of the drawers a little bottle, surrounded by a paper, not much bigger than an ordinary bottle of Macassar oil.'

'Macassar oil! Here's an anachronism!' thought the Sultan. But he suffered his wife to proceed with her tale.

'The old woman was putting this bottle away into her pocket, when the sultan's eye lighted upon it, and he asked her in a fury, why she was making off with his property?

'She said she had sold him the whole pack, with the exception of that bottle; and that it could be of no good to him, as it was only a common old crystal bottle, a family piece, of no sort of use to any but the owner.

"What is there in the bottle?" exclaimed the keen and astute vizier.

'At this the old woman blushed as far as her wizened old face could blush, hemmed, ha'd, stuttered, and showed evident signs of confusion. She said it was only a common bottle—that there was nothing in it—that is, only a powder—a little rhubarb.

"It's poison!" roared Mushook; "I'm sure it's poison!" And he forthwith seized the old hag by the throat, and would have strangled her, if the vizier had not wisely interposed, remarking, that if the woman were strangled there could be no means of knowing what the bottle contained.

"To show you, sire, that it is not poison," cried the old creature to the king, who by this time had wrenched the bottle out of her pocket, and held it in his hand; "I will

¹ These, as they have no sort of point except for the Persian scholar, are here entirely omitted.—G. O'G. G.

take a little of the powder it contains." Whereupon his majesty called for a teaspoon, determined to administer the powder to her himself. The chief of the eunuchs brought the teaspoon, the king emptied a little of the powder into it, and bidding the old wretch open her great, black, gaping, ruinous mouth, put a little of the powder on her tongue; when, to his astonishment, and as true as I sit here, her old hooked beak of a nose (which, by way of precaution, he was holding in his fingers) slipped from between them; the old, black tongue, on which he placed the teaspoon, disappeared from under it; and not only the nose and the tongue, but the whole old woman vanished away entirely, and his majesty stood there with his two hands extended—the one looking as if it pulled an imaginary nose, the other holding an empty teaspoon; and he himself staring wildly at vacancy!

'Scheherazade,' said the Sultan, gravely, 'you are drawing the long bow a little too strongly. In the thousand and one nights that we have passed together, I have given credit to every syllable you uttered. But this tale about the old woman, my love, is, upon my honour, too monstrous.'

'Not a whit, sir; and I assure your majesty that it is as true as the Koran itself. It is a fact perfectly well authenticated, and written afterwards, by King Mushook's orders, in the Persian annals. The old woman vanished altogether; the king was left standing there with the bottle and spoon; the vizier was dumb with wonder; and the only thing seen to quit the room was a little canary-bird, that suddenly started up before the king's face, and chirping out "kikiriki," flew out of the open window, skimmed over the ponds and plane-trees in the garden, and was last seen wheeling round and round the minaret of the great mosque of Teheran.'

'Mashallah!' exclaimed the Sultan. 'Heaven is great: but I never should have credited the tale, had not you, my love, vouched for it. Go on, madam, and tell us what became of the bottle and Sultan Mushook.'

'Sir, when the king had recovered from his astonishment, he fell, as his custom was, into a fury, and could only be calmed by the arguments and persuasions of the grand vizier.

"It is evident, sire," observed that dignitary, "that the powder which you have just administered possesses some magic property; either to make the persons taking

it invisible, or else to cause them to change into the form of some bird or other animal ; and very possibly the canary-bird which so suddenly appeared and disappeared just now, was the very old woman with whom your majesty was talking. We can easily see whether the powder creates invisibility, by trying its effects upon some one—the chief of the eunuchs for example.” And accordingly Hudge Gudge, the chief of the eunuchs, against whom the vizier had an old grudge, was compelled, with many wry faces, to taste the mixture.

“Thou art so ugly, Hudge Gudge,” exclaimed the vizier with a grin, “that to render thee invisible will only be conferring a benefit upon thee.” But, strange to say, though the eunuch was made to swallow a large dose, the powder had no sort of effect upon him, and he stood before his majesty and the prime minister as ugly and as visible as ever.

‘They now thought of looking at the paper in which the bottle was wrapped, and the king, not knowing how to read himself, bade the grand vizier explain to him the meaning of the writing which appeared upon the paper.

‘But the vizier confessed, after examining the document, that he could not understand it ; and though it was presented at the divan that day, to all the councillors, mollahs, and men learned in the law, not one of them could understand a syllable of the strange characters written on the paper. The council broke up in consternation ; for his majesty swore, that if the paper was not translated before the next day at noon, he would bastinado every one of the privy council, beginning with his excellency the grand vizier.

“Who has such a sharp wit as necessity ?” touchingly exclaims the poet Sadee, and so, in corroboration of the words of that divine songster, the next day at noon, sure enough, a man was found—a most ancient, learned, and holy dervish, who knew all the languages under the sun, and by consequence that in which the paper was written.

‘It was in the most secret Sanscrit tongue ; and when the dervish read it, he requested that he might communicate its contents privately to his majesty, or at least only in the presence of his first minister.

‘Retiring then to the private apartments with the vizier, his majesty bade the dervish interpret the meaning of the writing round the bottle.

“The meaning, sire, is this,” said the learned dervish. “Whoever, after bowing his head three times to the east—”

“The old woman waggled hers,” cried the king: “I remarked it, but thought it was only palsy.”

“Whoever, after bowing his head three times to the east, swallows a grain of this powder, may change himself into whatever animal he please: be it beast, or insect, or bird. Likewise, when he is so changed, he will know the language of beasts, insects, and birds, and be able to answer each after his kind. And when the person so transformed desires to be restored to his own shape, he has only to utter the name of the god ‘Budgaroo,’ who himself appeared upon earth in the shape of beasts, birds, aye, and fishes,¹ and he will instantly resume his proper figure. But let the person using this precious powder especially beware, that during the course of his metamorphosis he do not give way to laughter; for should he indulge in any such unholy mirth, his memory will infallibly forsake him, and not being able to recall the talismanic word, he will remain in the shape into which he has changed himself.”

‘When this strange document had been communicated to his majesty, he caused the dervish’s mouth to be filled with sugar-candy, gave him a purse of gold, and bade him depart with every honour.

“You had better at least have waited,” said the shrewd vizier, “to see if the interpretation be correct, for who can tell whether this dervish is deceiving us or no!”

‘King Mushook rejoined that that point should be put at rest at once, and grimly smiling, ordered the vizier to take a pinch of powder, and change himself into whatever animal he pleased.

‘Munsoor had nothing for it, but to wish himself a dog; he turned to the east, nodded his head thrice, swallowed the powder, and lo! there he was—a poodle—an old fat, lame, one-eyed poodle; whose appearance made his master laugh inordinately, though Munsoor himself, remembering the prohibition and penalty, was far too wise to indulge in any such cachinnation.

‘Having satisfied his royal master by his antics, the old

¹ In Professor Schwam’s *Sanskritische Alterthumskunde* is a learned account of the transmutations of this Indian divinity.—G. O’G. G.

vizier uttered the requisite word, and was speedily restored to his former shape.

‘And now I might tell how the King of Persia and his faithful attendant indulged themselves in all sorts of transformations by the use of the powder ; how they frequented the society of all manner of beasts, and gathered a deal of wisdom from their conversation ; how perching on this housetop in the likeness of sparrows, they peered into all the family secrets of the proprietors ; how buzzing into that harem window in the likeness of blue-bottle flies, they surveyed at their leisure the beauties within, and enjoyed the confusion of the emirs and noblemen, when they described to them at divan every particular regarding the shape, and features, and dress, of the ladies they kept so secretly in the anderoon. One of these freaks had like to have cost the king dear ; for sitting on Hassan Ebu Suneebee’s wall, looking at Bulkous, his wife, and lost in admiration of that moon of beauty, a spider issued out from a crevice, and had as nearly as possible gobbled up the King of Persia. This event was a lesson to him, therefore ; and he was so frightened by it, that he did not care for the future to be too curious about other people’s affairs, or at least to take upon himself the form of such a fragile thing as a blue-bottle fly.

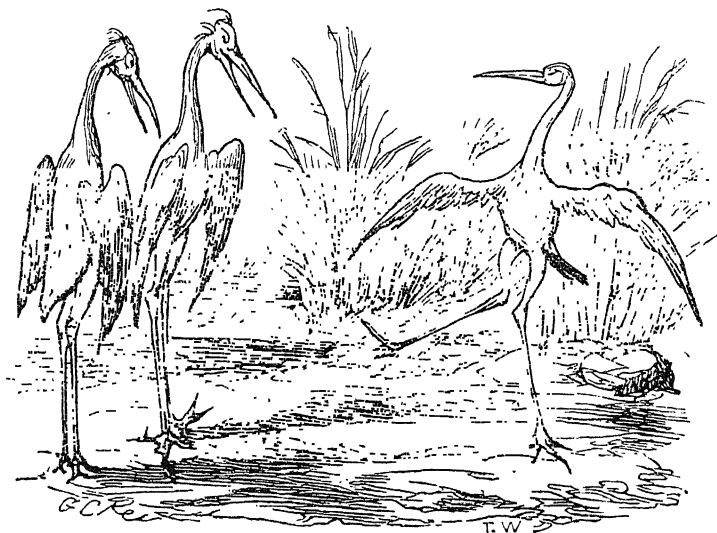
‘One morning—indeed I believe on my conscience that his majesty and the vizier had been gadding all night, or they never could have been abroad so early—they were passing those large swampy grounds, which everybody knows are in the neighbourhood of Teheran, and where the Persian lords are in the habit of hunting herons with the hawk. The two gentlemen were disguised, I don’t know how ; but seeing a stork by the side of the pool, stretching its long neck, and tossing about its legs very queerly, King Mushook felt suddenly a longing to know what these motions of the animal meant, and taking upon themselves likewise the likeness of storks (the vizier’s dumpy nose stretched out into a very strange bill, I promise you), they both advanced to the bird at the pool, and greeted it in the true storkish language.

“ ‘Good morning, Mr. Long Bill,” said the stork (a female), curtsying politely, “you are abroad early to-day ; and the sharp air, no doubt, makes you hungry : here is half an eel which I beg you to try, or a frog, which you will find very

fat and tender." But the royal stork was not inclined to eat frogs, being no Frank.'

'Have a care, Scheherazade,' here interposed the Sultan. 'Do you mean to tell me that there are any people, even among the unbelievers, who are such filthy wretches as to eat frogs?—Bah! I can't believe it!'

Scheherazade did not vouch for the fact, but continued. 'The king declined the proffered breakfast, and presently falling into conversation with the young female stork,



bantered her gaily about her presence in such a place of a morning, and without her mamma, praised her figure and the slimness of her legs (which made the young stork blush till she was almost as red as a flamingo), and paid her a thousand compliments that made her think the stranger one of the most delightful creatures she had ever met.

"Sir," said she, "we live in some reeds hard by; and as my mamma, one of the best mothers in the world, who fed us children with her own blood when we had nothing else for dinner, is no more, my papa, who is always lazy, has bidden us to look out for ourselves. You were pleased just now to compliment my l—— my *limbs*," says the stork,

turning her eyes to the ground ; “ and the fact is, that I wish to profit, sir, by those graces with which nature endowed me, and am learning to dance. I came out here to practise a little step that I am to perform before some friends this morning, and here, sir, you have my history.”

“ “ I do pray and beseech you to let us see the rehearsal of the step,” said the king, quite amused ; on which the young stork, stretching out her scraggy neck, and giving him an ogle with her fish-like eyes, fell to dancing and capering in such a ridiculous way, that the king and vizier could restrain their gravity no longer, but burst out into an immoderate fit of laughter. I do not know that Munsoor would have laughed of his own accord, for he was a man of no sort of humour ; but he made it a point whenever his master laughed always to roar too ; and in this instance his servility cost him dear.

‘ The young female stork, as they were laughing, flew away in a huff, and thought them no doubt the most ill-mannered brutes in the world. When they were restored to decent gravity, the king voted that they should resume their shapes again, and hie home to breakfast. So he turned himself round to the east, bobbed his head three times according to the receipt, and—

“ “ Vizier,” said he, “ what the deuce is the word ?—Hudge, kudge, fudge—what is it ? ”

‘ The vizier had forgotten too ; and then the condition annexed to the charm came over these wretched men, and they felt they were storks for ever. In vain they racked their poor brains to discover the word—they were no wiser at the close of the day than at the beginning, and at night-fall were fain to take wing from the lonely morass where they had passed so many miserable hours, and seek for shelter somewhere.’

PART THE SECOND—THE ENCHANTED PRINCESS

‘ AFTER flying about for some time, the poor storks perched upon the palace, where it was evident that all was in consternation. “ Ah ! ” said the king, with a sigh, “ why, O cursed vizier, didst thou ever bring that beggar-woman into my presence ? here it is, an hour after sunset, and at this hour I should have been seated at a comfortable supper, but for thy odious officiousness, and my own fatal curiosity.”

‘ What his majesty said was true ; and, having eaten nothing all day (for they could not make up their stomachs to subsist upon raw frogs and fish), he saw, to his inexpressible mortification, his own supper brought into the royal closet at the usual hour, taken away from thence, and the greater part of it eaten up by the servants as they carried it back to the kitchen.

‘ For three days longer, as they lingered about Teheran, that city was in evident dismay and sorrow. On the first day a council was held, and a great deal of discussion took place between the mollahs and emirs ; on the second day another council was held, and all the mollahs and emirs swore eternal fidelity to King Mushook ; on the third day a third council was held, and they voted to a man that all faithful Persians had long desired the return of their rightful sovereign and worship, and proclaimed Ghuzroo Sultan of Persia. Ghuzroo and his son, Ameen Adawb, entered the divan. What a thrill passed through the bosom of Mushook (who was perched on a window of the hall) when he saw Ghuzroo walk up and take possession of his august throne, and beheld in the countenance of that unbeliever the traits of the very old woman who had sold him the box !

‘ It would be tedious to describe to your majesty the numberless voyages and the long dreary flights which the unhappy sultan and vizier now took. There is hardly a mosque in all Persia or Arabia on which they did not light ; and as for frogs and fishes, they speedily learned to be so little particular as to swallow them raw with considerable satisfaction, and, I do believe, tried every pond and river in Asia.

'At last they came to India ; and being then somewhere in the neighbourhood of Agra, they went to take their evening meal at a lake in a wood : the moon was shining on it, and there was upon one of the trees an owl hooting and screaming in the most melancholy manner.

'The two wanderers were discussing their victuals, and it did not at first come into their heads to listen to the owl's bewailings ; but as they were satisfied, they began presently to hearken to the complaints of the bird of night that sat on a mango-tree, its great round white face shining in the moon. The owl sung a little elegy, which may be rendered in the following manner :—

'Too—too—too—oo long have I been in this imprisonment ;

Who—o—o—o is coming to deliver me ?

In the darkness of the night I look out, and see not my deliverer ;
I make the grove resound with my strains, but no one hears me.

'I look out at the moon ;—my face was once as fair as hers :

She is the queen of night, and I was a princess as celebrated.

I sit under the cypress-trees, and was once as thin as they are :
Could their dark leaves compare to my raven tresses ?

'I was a princess once, and my talents were everywhere sung of ;

I was indebted for my popularity not only to beauty but to whit ;

Ah, where is the destined prince that is to come to liberate and
to whoo ?'

'Cut the verses short, Scheherazade,' said the Sultan. And that obedient princess instantly resumed her story in prose.

"What," said King Mushook, stepping up to the owl.
 "are you too the victim of enchantment ?"

"Alas ! kind stranger, of whatever feather you be—for the moon is so bright that I cannot see you in the least,—I was a princess, as I have just announced in my poem ; and famous, I may say, for my beauty all over India. Rotu Muckun is my name, and my father is King of Hindostan. A monster from Bombay, an idolater and practiser of enchantments, came to my court, and asked my hand for his son ; but because I spurned the wretch, he, under the disguise of an old woman—"

"With a box of trinkets," broke out the vizier.

"Of no such thing," said the owl, or rather the disguised Princess Rotu Muckun ; "with a basket of peaches, of which I was known to be fond, entered the palace garden one evening as I was seated there with my maidens, and

offered me a peach, of which I partook, and was that instant turned into an owl. My attendants fled, screaming at the metamorphosis ; and as the old woman went away, she clenched her fist at me and laughed, and said, ' Now, princess, you will remember the vengeance of Ghuzroo.' "

" " This is indeed marvellous ! " exclaimed the King of Persia. " Know, madam, that the humble individual who now addresses you was a year since no other than Persia's king."

" " Heavens ! " said the princess, trembling, and rustling all her feathers ; " can you be the famous and beautiful Mushook, who disappeared from Teheran with his grand vizier ? "

" " No other, madam," said the king, laying his claw on his breast ; " and the most devoted of your servants."

" " Heigho ! " said she ; " I would that you had resumed your former shape, and that what you said were true ; but you men, I have always heard, are sad, sad deceivers ! "

" Being pressed further to explain the meaning of her wish, the princess said that she never could resume her former appearance until she could find some one who would marry her under her present form ; and what was more, she said an old Brahmin had made a prophecy concerning her, that she should be saved from destruction by a stork.

" " This speech," said the vizier, drawing his majesty aside, " is the sheerest and most immodest piece of fiction on the part of Madam Owl that ever I heard. What is the upshot of it ? The hideous old wretch, pining for a husband, and not being able on account of her age and ugliness, doubtless, to procure one among birds of her own degree, sees us two slim, elegant, fashionable fellows pass, and trumps up instantly a story about her being a princess, and the deuce knows what. Even suppose she be a princess, let your majesty remember what the poet Ferrooz observes—

" Women are not all beautiful—for one moon-eyed,
Nine hundred and ninety-nine are as ugly as Shaitan.

Let us have a care, then, how we listen to her stories."

" " Vizier," answered his majesty, " I have remarked that you are always talking about ugliness ; and, by my beard ! you are the ugliest man in my dominions. Be she handsome or hideous, I am sure that there is something

in the story of the princess mysteriously connected with our fate. Do you not remember that extraordinary dream which I had in my youth, and which declared that I too should be saved from danger by an owl? Had you not also such a dream on the self-same night? Let us not, therefore, disregard the warnings of Fate:—the risk shall be run, the princess shall be married, or my name's not Mushook."

"Well, sir," said the vizier, with a shrug, "if you insist upon marrying her, I cannot, of course, give any objection to the royal will: and your majesty must remember that I wash my hands of the business altogether."

"I marry her!" screamed the king, in a rage; "Vizier, are you a fool? Do you suppose me such a fool as to buy a pig in a poke, as they say at Bagdad?"

"I was sure your majesty would not be so imprudent," said the vizier, in a soothing tone.

"Of course, I wouldn't; no, vizier, my old and tried servant, *you* shall marry the Princess Rotu Muckun, and incur the risk of this adventure."

The poor vizier knew he had only to obey, were his master to bid him to bite off his own nose; so he promised compliance in this instance with as good a grace as he could muster. But the gentlemen, in the course of this little dispute, had not taken into consideration that the owl had wings as well as they, and had followed them into the dark brake where the colloquy took place, and could see them perfectly, and hear every word that passed.

"Tut-tut-tut-too!" shrieked out the owl, in a shrill voice, "my lord of Persia, and you, grand vizier, do you suppose that I, the Princess of Hindostan, am to be cast about from one person to another like a shuttlecock? Do you suppose that I, the loveliest woman in the universe, am tamely to listen to doubts regarding my beauty, and finally to yield up my charms to an ugly, old, decrepit monster, like your grand vizier?"

"Madam"—interposed the King of Persia.

"Tut-tut-too! don't madam me, sir," said the princess, in a flutter,—*mademoiselle*, if you please; and *mademoiselle* to remain, rather than be insulted so. Talk about buying a pig in a poke, indeed! here is a pretty gentleman-like phrase for a monarch who has been used to good society!—pig in a poke, indeed! I'll tell you what, my lord,

I have a great mind to make you carry your pigs to another market. And as for my poor person, I will see," cried the owl, sobbing, "if some noble-hearted person be not more favourable to-to-to to-*it*—to-oo-oo-oo-oo!" Here she set up such an hysterical howling, that his majesty the King of Persia thought she would have dropped off her perch.

'He was a good-natured sovereign, and could not bear to see the tears of a woman.'

'What a fool!' said the Sultan. But Scheherazade took no notice.

'And having his heart melted by her sorrows, said to her, "Cheer up, madam, it shall never be said that Mushook deserted a lady in distress. I swear to you by the ninth book of the Koran, that you shall have my hand as soon as I get it back myself; in the meanwhile accept my claw, and with it the heart of the King of Persia."

"Oh, sir!" said the owl, "this is too great joy—too much honour—I cannot," said she, in a faint voice, "bear it!—O Heavens!—Maidens, unlace me!—Some water—some water—a jug-jug-jug—"

'Here what the king had formerly feared actually took place, and the owl, in an excess of emotion, actually tumbled off the branch in a fainting fit, and fell into the thicket below.

'The vizier and his majesty ran like mad to the lake for water; but ah! what a scene met their view on coming back!

'Forth there came to meet them the loveliest damsel that ever greeted the eyes of monarch or vizier. Fancy, sir, a pair of eyes——'

'Cut the description short, Scheherazade,' interrupted the Sultan; 'your eyes, my dear, are quite pretty enough for me.'

'In short, sir, she was the most lovely woman in the world of her time; and the poor old vizier, as he beheld her, was mad to think what a prize he had lost. The King of Persia flung himself at her feet, and vowed himself to be the happiest of men.'

'Happiest of men!' roared out the Sultan. 'Why, woman, he is a stork: how did he get back to his shape, I want to know?'

'Why, sir, it must be confessed, that when the Princess of Hindostan, now restored to her pristine beauty, saw that no sort of change had taken place in her affianced

husband, she felt a little ashamed of the connexion, and more than once in their journey from Agra to the court of her father at Delhi, she thought of giving her companion the slip ; “ For how,” said she, “ am I to marry a stork ? ” However, the king would never leave her for a moment out of his sight, or, when his majesty slept, the vizier kept his eye upon her ; and so at last they walked and walked until they came near to Delhi on the banks of the Jumna.

‘ A magnificent barge was floating down the river, pulled by a hundred men with gilded oars, and dressed in liveries of cloth of gold. The prow of the barge was shaped like a peacock, and formed of precious stones and enamel ; and at the stern of the vessel was an awning of crimson silk, supported by pillars of silver, under which, in a yellow satin robe, covered with diamonds of intolerable brightness, there sat an old gentleman smoking, and dissolved seemingly in grief.

“ Heavens ! ” cried the princess, “ ’tis my father ! ” and straightway she began flapping her pocket-handkerchief, and crying at the top of her voice, “ Father, father, ’tis your Rotu Muckun calls ! ”

‘ When the old gentleman, who was smoking in yellow satin, heard that voice, he started up wildly, let drop his hookah, shouted hoarsely to the rowers to pull to the shore, and the next minute tumbled backwards in a fainting fit.—The next minute but one he was in the arms of his beloved girl, the proudest and happiest of fathers.

‘ The princess at the moment of meeting, and in the hurry of running into the boat, had, it must be confessed, quite forgotten her two storks ; and as these made an effort to follow her, one of the rowers with his gilded oar gave the grand vizier a crack over the leg, which caused that poor functionary to limp for many years after. But our wanderers were not to be put off so. Taking wing, they flew right under the awning of the boat, and perched down on the sofa close by the King of Hindostan and his daughter.

“ What, in Heaven’s name,” said Hindostan, “ are these filthy birds, that smell so horribly of fish ? Faugh ! turn them out.”

“ Filthy yourself, sir, my brother,” answered the King of Persia, “ the smell of fish is not much worse than that of tobacco, I warrant. Heigho ! I have not had a pipe for many a long day ! ”

'Here Rotu Muckun, seeing her father's wonder that a stork should talk his language, and his anger at the bird's impudence, interposed and related to his majesty all the circumstances attending the happy change that had taken place.

'While she was speaking (and her story was a pretty long one), the King of Persia flung himself back in an easy attitude on one of the sofas, crossing his long legs, and



folding his wings over his chest. He was, to tell the truth, rather piqued at the reception which his brother of Hindostan had given him. Old Munsoor stood moodily at a little distance, holding up his game leg.

'His master, however, was determined to show that he was perfectly at his ease. "Hindostan, my old buck," said, he, "what a deuced comfortable sofa this is; and, egad, what a neat turn-out of a barge."

'The old gentleman, who was a stickler for ceremony, said, drily, "I am glad your majesty finds the sofa com-

fortable, and the barge to your liking. Here we don't call it a barge, but a BUDGEROW."

'As he spoke this word, the King of Persia bounced off his seat as if he had been shot, and upset the hookah over the King of Hindostan's legs; the moody old grand vizier clapped his wings and screamed for joy; the princess shrieked for astonishment; and the whole boat's crew were in wonder, as they saw the two birds turn towards the east, bob their long bills three times, and call out "Budgerow!"

'At that word the birds disappeared, and in their place, before the astonished sovereign of Hindostan there stood two gentlemen in the Persian habit. One of them was fat, old, and one-eyed, of a yellow complexion, and limping on a leg—'twas Munsoor, the vizier. The other—ah, what a thrill passed through Rotu Muckun's heart as she beheld him!—had a dark countenance, a dark flashing eye, a royal black beard, a high forehead, on which a little Persian cap was jauntily placed. A pelisse of cashmere and sables covered his broad chest, and showed off his excessively slim waist to advantage; his little feet were encased in yellow slippers; when he spoke, his cornelian lips displayed thirty-two pearly teeth; in his girdle was his sword, and on the hilt of it that famous diamond, worth one hundred and forty-three millions of tomauns.

'When the King of Hindostan saw that diamond, he at once knew that Mushook could be no impostor, and taking him heartily by the hand, the good-natured monarch ordered servants to pick up the pieces of the chillum, and to bring fresh ones for the King of Persia and himself.

'"You say it is a long time since you smoked a pipe," said Hindostan, waggishly; 'there is a lady here that I dare swear will fill one for you.'" With this and other sallies the royal party passed on to Delhi, where Munsoor was accommodated with diaculum and surgical aid, and where the marriage was celebrated between the King of Persia and the Princess of Hindostan.'

'And did the King of Persia ever get his kingdom back again?' asked the Sultan.

'Of course he did, sir,' replied Scheherazade, 'for where did you ever hear of a king who had been kept out of his just rights by a wicked enchanter, that did not regain his possessions at the end of a story? No, sir, at the last

page of a tale, wicked enchanters are always punished, and suffering virtue always rewarded ; and though I have my doubts whether in real life——’

‘ Be hanged to your prate, madam, and let me know at once *how* King Mushook got back his kingdom, and what he did to Ghuzroo and his son Ameen Adawb ? ’

‘ Why, sir, marching with five hundred thousand men, whom his father-in-law placed under his command, King Mushook went, via Kabul and Afghanistan, into Persia ; he defeated the usurping Ghuzroo upon the plains of Teheran, and caused that idolatrous monarch to be bastinadoed to death. As for his son, Ameen Adawb, as that young prince had not taken any part in his father’s rebellion, Mushook, who was a merciful sovereign, only ordered him to take a certain quantity of the powder, and to wish himself to be a stork. Then he put him into a cage, and hung him outside the palace wall. This done, Mushook and his princess swayed magnificently the sceptre of Persia, lived happily, were blest by their subjects, had an infinite number of children, and ate pilau and rice every day.

‘ Now, sir, it happened, after several years’ captivity in the cage, that the Prince Ameen Adawb——’

Here Scheherazade paused ; for looking at her royal husband, she saw that his majesty was fast asleep, and deferred the history of Prince Ameen Adawb until another occasion.

THE FITZ-BOODLE PAPERS

[*Fraser's Magazine*, 1842–3, and *Miscellanies*, Vol. IV, 1857]

THE FITZ-BOODLE PAPERS

FITZ-BOODLE'S CONFESSIONS

[*Fraser's Magazine*, June, 1842.]

PREFACE

GEORGE FITZ-BOODLE, ESQUIRE, TO OLIVER YORKE,
ESQUIRE

OMNIUM CLUB, May 20, 1842.

DEAR SIR,—I have always been considered the third-best whist-player in Europe, and (though never betting more than five pounds) have for many years past added considerably to my yearly income by my skill in the game, until the commencement of the present season, when a French gentleman, Monsieur Lalouette, was admitted to the club where I usually play. His skill and reputation were so great, that no men of the club were inclined to play against us two of a side ; and the consequence has been, that we have been in a manner pitted against one another. By a strange turn of luck (for I cannot admit the idea of his superiority), Fortune, since the Frenchman's arrival, has been almost constantly against me, and I have lost two-and-thirty nights in the course of a couple of score of nights' play.

Everybody knows that I am a poor man ; and so much has Lalouette's luck drained my finances, that only last week I was obliged to give him that famous grey cob on which you have seen me riding in the Park (I can't afford a thoroughbred, and hate a cocktail),—I was, I say, forced to give him up my cob in exchange for four ponies which I owed him. Thus, as I never walk, being a heavy man whom nobody cares to mount, my time hangs heavily on my hands ; and as I hate home, or that apology for it—a bachelor's lodgings, and as I have nothing earthly to do

now until I can afford to purchase another horse, I spend my time in sauntering from one club to another, passing many rather listless hours in them before the men come in.

You will say, Why not take to backgammon, or *écarté*, or amuse yourself with a book ? Sir (putting out of the question the fact that I do not play upon credit), I make a point never to play before candles are lighted ; and as for books, I must candidly confess to you I am not a reading man. 'Twas but the other day that some one recommended me to read your Magazine after dinner, saying it contained an exceedingly witty article upon—I forget what—I give you my honour, sir, that I took up the work at six, meaning to amuse myself till seven, when Lord Trumpington's dinner was to come off, and egad ! in two minutes I fell asleep, and never woke till midnight. Nobody ever thought of looking for me in the library, where nobody ever goes ; and so ravenously hungry was I, that I was obliged to walk off to Crockford's for supper.

What is it that makes you literary persons so stupid ? I have met various individuals in society who I was told were writers of books, and that sort of thing, and expecting rather to be amused by their conversation, have invariably found them dull to a degree, and as for information, without a particle of it. Sir, I actually asked one of these fellows, 'What was the nick to seven ?' and he stared in my face, and said he didn't know. He was hugely overdressed in satin, rings, chains, and so forth ; and at the beginning of dinner was disposed to be rather talkative and pert ; but my little sally silenced *him*, I promise you, and got up a good laugh at his expense, too. 'Leave George alone,' said little Lord Cinqbars, 'I warrant he'll be a match for any of you literary fellows.' Cinqbars is no great wiseacre ; but, indeed, it requires no great wiseacre to know *that*.

What is the simple deduction to be drawn from this truth ? Why this,—that a man to be amusing and well-informed, has no need of books, at all, and had much better go to the world and to men for his knowledge. There was Ulysses, now, the Greek fellow engaged in the Trojan war, as I dare say you know ; well, he was the cleverest man possible, and how ? from having seen men and cities, their manners noted and their realms surveyed, to be sure : so have I—I have been in every capital, and can order a dinner in every language in Europe.

My notion, then, is this. I have a great deal of spare time on my hands, and as I am told you pay a handsome sum to persons writing for you, I will furnish you occasionally with some of my views upon men and things ; occasional histories of my acquaintance, which I think may amuse you ; personal narratives of my own ; essays, and what not. I am told that I do not spell correctly. This, of course, I don't know ; but you will remember that Richelieu and Marlborough could not spell, and, egad ! I am an honest man, and desire to be no better than they. I know that it is the matter, and not the manner, which is of importance. Have the goodness, then, to let one of your understrappers correct the spelling and the grammar of my papers ; and you can give him a few shillings in my name for his trouble.

Begging you to accept the assurance of my high consideration, I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE SAVAGE FITZ-BOODLE.

PS.—By the way, I have said in my letter that I found *all* literary persons vulgar and dull. Permit me to contradict this with regard to yourself. I met you once at Blackwall, I think it was, and really did not remark anything offensive in your accent or appearance.

BEFORE commencing the series of moral disquisitions, &c. which I intend, the reader may as well know who I am, and what my past course of life has been. To say that I am a Fitz-Boodle is to say at once that I am a gentleman. Our family has held the estate of Booodle ever since the reign of Henry II ; and it is out of no ill will to my elder brother, or unnatural desire for his death, but only because the estate is a very good one, that I wish heartily it was mine : I would say as much of Chatsworth or Eaton Hall.

I am not, in the first place, what is called a ladies' man, having contracted an irrepressible habit of smoking after dinner, which has obliged me to give up a great deal of the dear creatures' society ; nor can I go much to country-houses for the same reason. Say what they will, ladies do not like you to smoke in their bedrooms ; their silly little noses scent out the odour upon the chintz, weeks after you have left them. Sir John has been caught coming to bed particularly merry and redolent of cigar-

smoke. Young George, from Eton, was absolutely found in the little green-house puffing an Havana ; and when discovered, they both lay the blame upon Fitz-Boodle. 'It was Mr. Fitz-Boodle, mamma,' says George, 'who offered me the cigar, and I did not like to refuse him.' 'That rascal Fitz seduced us, my dear,' says Sir John, 'and kept us laughing until past midnight.' Her ladyship instantly sets me down as a person to be avoided. 'George,' whispers she to her boy, 'promise me, on your honour, when you go to town, not to know that man.' And when she enters the breakfast-room for prayers, the first greeting is a peculiar expression of countenance and inhaling of breath, by which my lady indicates the presence of some exceedingly disagreeable odour in the room. She makes you the faintest of curtsies, and regards you, if not with a 'flashing eye,' as in the novels, at least with a 'distended nostril.' During the whole of the service her heart is filled with the blackest gall towards you ; and she is thinking about the best means of getting you out of the house.

What is this smoking that it should be considered a crime ? I believe in my heart that women are jealous of it, as of a rival. They speak of it as of some secret, awful vice that seizes upon a man, and makes him a Pariah from genteel society. I would lay a guinea that many a lady who has just been kind enough to read the above lines lays down the book, after this confession of mine that I am a smoker, and says, 'Oh, the vulgar wretch !' and passes on to something else.

The fact is, that the cigar *is* a rival to the ladies, and their conqueror, too. In the chief pipe-smoking nations they are kept in subjection. While the chief, Little White Belt, smokes, the women are silent in his wigwam ; while Mahomet Ben Jawbrahim causes volumes of odorous incense of Latakia to play round his beard, the women of the harem do not disturb his meditations, but only add to the delight of them by tinkling on a dulcimer and dancing before him. When Professor Strumpff of Göttingen takes down No. 13 from the wall, with a picture of Beatrice Cenci upon it, and which holds a pound of canaster, the Frau Professorin knows that for two hours Hermann is engaged, and takes up her stockings, and knits in quiet. The constitution of French society has been quite changed within the last

twelve years ; an ancient and respectable dynasty has been overthrown ; an aristocracy which Napoleon could never master has disappeared : and from what cause ? I do not hesitate to say,—*from the habit of smoking*. Ask any man whether, five years before the revolution of July, if you wanted a cigar at Paris, they did not bring you a roll of tobacco with a straw in it ? Now, the whole city smokes ; society is changed ; and be sure of this, ladies, a similar combat is going on in this country at present between cigar-smoking and you. Do you suppose you will conquer ? Look over the wide world, and see that your adversary has overcome it. Germany has been puffing for threescore years ; France smokes to a man. Do you think you can keep the enemy out of England ? Pshaw ! look at his progress. Ask the club-houses, Have they smoking-rooms, or not ? Are they not obliged to yield to the general want of the age, in spite of the resistance of the old women on the committees ? I, for my part, do not despair to see a bishop lolling out of the Athenaeum with a cheroot in his mouth, or, at any rate, a pipe stuck in his shovel-hat.

But as in all great causes and in promulgating of new and illustrious theories, their first propounders and exponents are generally the victims of their enthusiasm, of course the first preachers of smoking have been martyrs, too ; and George Fitz-Boodle is one. The first gasman was ruined ; the inventor of steam-engine printing became a pauper. I began to smoke in days when the task was one of some danger, and paid the penalty of my crime. I was flogged most fiercely for my first cigar ; for being asked to dine one Sunday evening with a half-pay colonel of dragoons (the gallant, simple, humorous Shortcut—Heaven bless him !—I have had many a guinea from him who had so few), he insisted upon my smoking in his room at the Salopian, and the consequence was, that I became so violently ill as to be reported intoxicated upon my return to Slaughter-house School, where I was a boarder, and I was whipped the next morning for my peccadillo. At Christ Church, one of our tutors was the celebrated lamented Otto Rose, who would have been a bishop under the present Government, had not an immoderate indulgence in water-gruel cut short his elegant and useful career. He was a good man, a pretty scholar and poet (the episode upon the discovery of eau de Cologne, in his prize poem on ‘The Rhine,’ was

considered a masterpiece of art, though I am not much of a judge myself upon such matters), and he was as remarkable for his fondness for a tuft as for his nervous antipathy to tobacco. As ill luck would have it, my rooms (in Tom Quad) were exactly under his; and I was grown by this time to be a confirmed smoker. I was a baronet's son (we are of James's first creation), and I do believe our tutor could have pardoned any crime in the world but this. He had seen me in a tandem, and at that moment was seized with a violent fit of sneezing (sternutatory paroxysm, he called it),—at the conclusion of which I was a mile down the Woodstock Road. He had seen me in pink, as we used to call it, swaggering in the open sunshine across a grass-plot in the court; but spied out opportunely a servant, one Todhunter by name, who was going to morning chapel with his shoe-string untied, and forthwith sprang towards that unfortunate person, to set him an imposition. Everything, in fact, but tobacco he could forgive. Why did cursed fortune bring him into the rooms over mine? The odour of the cigars made his gentle spirit quite furious; and one luckless morning, when I was standing before my 'oak,' and chanced to puff a great *bouffée* of Varinas into his face, he forgot his respect for my family altogether (I was the second son, and my brother a sickly creature *then*,—he is now sixteen stone in weight, and has a half-score of children); gave me a severe lecture, to which I replied rather hotly, as was my wont. And then came demand for an apology; refusal on my part; appeal to the Dean; convocation; and rustication of George Savage Fitz-Boodle.

My father had taken a second wife (of the noble house of Flintskinner), and Lady Fitz-Boodle detested smoking, as a woman of her high principles should. She had an entire mastery over the worthy old gentleman, and thought I was a sort of demon of wickedness. The old man went to his grave with some similar notion,—Heaven help him! and left me but the wretched twelve thousand pounds secured to me on my poor mother's property.

In the army, my luck was much the same. I joined the—th Lancers, Lieut.-Col. Lord Martingale, in the year 1817. I only did duty with the regiment for three months. We were quartered at Cork, where I found the Irish doo-dheen and tobacco the pleasantest smoking possible; and

was found by his lordship one day upon stable duty, smoking the shortest, dearest, little, dumpy clay-pipe in the world.

‘Cornet Fitz-Boodle,’ said my lord, in a towering passion, ‘from what blackguard did you get that pipe?’

I omit the oaths which garnished invariably his lordship’s conversation.

‘I got it, my lord,’ said I, ‘from one Terence Mullins, a jingle-driver, with a packet of his peculiar tobacco. You sometimes smoke Turkish, I believe; do try this. Isn’t it good?’ And in the simplest way in the world I puffed a volume into his face. ‘I see you like it,’ said I, so coolly, that the men, and I do believe the horses, burst out laughing.

He started back—choking almost, and recovered himself only to vent such a storm of oaths and curses, that I was compelled to request Capt. Rawdon (the captain on duty) to take note of his lordship’s words; and unluckily could not help adding a question which settled my business. ‘You were good enough,’ I said, ‘to ask me, my lord, from what blackguard I got my pipe; might I ask from what blackguard you learned your language?’

This was quite enough. Had I said ‘from what *gentleman* did your lordship learn your language?’ the point would have been quite as good, and my lord Martingale would have suffered in my place: as it was, I was so strongly recommended to sell out by his Royal Highness the Commander-in-chief, that being of a good-natured disposition, never knowing how to refuse a friend, I at once threw up my hopes of military distinction, and retired into civil life.

My lord was kind enough to meet me afterwards, in a field in the Glaumire Road, where he put a ball into my leg. This I returned to him some years later with about twenty-three others—black ones—when he came to be balloted for at a club of which I have the honour to be a member.

Thus by the indulgence of a simple and harmless propensity,—of a propensity which can inflict an injury upon no person or thing except the coat and the person of him who indulges in it,—of a custom honoured and observed in almost all the nations of the world,—of a custom which far from leading a man into any wickedness or dissipation to which youth is subject, on the contrary, begets only benevolent silence and thoughtful good-humoured observation, I found at the age of twenty all my prospects in life destroyed.

I cared not for woman in those days ; the calm smoker has a sweet companion in his pipe : I did not drink immoderately of wine ; for though a friend to trifling potations, to excessively strong drinks tobacco is abhorrent ; I never thought of gambling, for the lover of the pipe has no need of such excitement ; but I was considered a monster of dissipation in my family, and bade fair to come to ruin.

‘ Look at George,’ my mother-in-law said to the genteel and correct young Flintskimmers ; ‘ he entered the world with every prospect in life, and see in what an abyss of degradation his fatal habits have plunged him ! At school he was flogged and disgraced, he was disgraced and rusticated at the University, he was disgraced and expelled from the army ! He might have had the living of Boodle (her ladyship gave it to one of her nephews), but he would not take his degree ; his papa would have purchased him a troop—nay, a lieutenant-colonelcy some day, but for his fatal excesses. And now as long as my dear husband will listen to the voice of a wife who adores him—never, never shall he spend a shilling upon so worthless a young man. He has a small income from his mother (I cannot but think that the first Lady Fitz-Boodle was a weak and misguided person) ; let him live upon his mean pittance as he can, and I heartily pray we may not hear of him in jail ! ’

My brother, after he came to the estate, married the ninth daughter of our neighbour, Sir John Spreadeagle ; and Boodle Hall has seen a new little Fitz-Boodle with every succeeding spring. The dowager retired to Scotland with a large jointure and a wondrous heap of savings. Lady Fitz is a good creature, but she thinks me something diabolical, trembles when she sees me, and gathers all her children about her, rushes into the nursery whenever I pay that little seminary a visit, and actually slapped poor little Frank’s ears one day when I was teaching him to ride upon the back of a Newfoundland dog.

‘ George,’ said my brother to me the last time I paid him a visit at the old hall, ‘ don’t be angry, my dear fellow, but Maria is in a—hum—in a delicate situation, expecting her—hum—(the eleventh)—and do you know you frighten her ? It was but yesterday you met her in the Rookery, you were smoking that enormous German pipe, and when she came in she had an hysterical seizure, and Drench says that in her situation it’s dangerous ; and I say, George,

if you go to town you'll find a couple of hundred at your banker's ; ' and with this the poor fellow shook me by the hand, and called for a fresh bottle of claret.

Since then he told me, with many hesitations, that my room at Boodle Hall had been made into a second nursery. I see my sister-in-law in London twice or thrice in the season, and the little people, who have almost forgotten to call me Uncle George.

It's hard, too, for I am a lonely man, after all, and my heart yearns to them. The other day I smuggled a couple of them into my chambers, and had a little feast of cream and strawberries to welcome them. But it had like to have cost the nursery-maid (a Swiss girl that Fitz-Boodle hired somewhere in his travels) her place. My step-mamma, who happened to be in town, came flying down in her chariot, pounced upon the poor thing and the children in the midst of the entertainment ; and when I asked her, with rather a bad grace to be sure, to take a chair and a share of the feast,—

' Mr. Fitz-Boodle,' said she, ' I am not accustomed to sit down in a place that smells of tobacco like an ale-house—an ale-house inhabited by a *serpent*, sir ! A *serpent* ! do you understand me ? who carries his poison into his brother's own house, and pursues his infamous designs before his brother's own children. Put on Miss Maria's bonnet this instant. Mamsell, ontondy-voo ? *Metty le bonny à mamsell* : and I shall take care, mamsell, that you return to Switzerland to-morrow. I've no doubt you are a relation of Courvoisier : *oui, oui, Courvoisier ; vous comprenny* : and you shall certainly be sent back to your friends.'

With this speech, and with the children and their maid sobbing before her, my lady retired ; but for once my sister-in-law was on my side, not liking the meddlement of the elder lady.

I know, then, that from indulging in that simple habit of smoking, I have gained among the ladies a dreadful reputation. I see that they look coolly upon me, and darkly at their husbands when they arrive at home in my company. Men, I observe, in consequence, ask me to dine much oftener at the club, or the Star and Garter at Richmond, or at Lovegrove's, than in their own houses ; and with this sort of arrangement I am fain to acquiesce ; for, as I said before, I am of an easy temper, and can at

any rate take my cigar-case out after dinner at Blackwall, when my lady or the duchess is not by. I know, of course, the best *men* in town ; and as for ladies' society, not having it (for I will have none of your pseudo-ladies, such as sometimes honour bachelors' parties,—actresses, couturières, opera-dancers, and so forth)—as for ladies' society, I say, I cry pish ! 'tis not worth the trouble of the complimenting, and the bother of pumps and black silk stockings.

Let any man remember what ladies' society was when he had an opportunity of seeing them among themselves, as What-d'ye-call'em does in the Thesmophoriazû—(I beg pardon, I was on the verge of a classical allusion, which I abominate)—I mean at that period of his life, when the intellect is pretty acute, though the body is small—namely, when a young gentleman is about eleven years of age, dining at his father's table during the holidays, and is requested by his papa to quit the dinner-table when the ladies retire from it.

Corbleu ! I recollect their whole talk as well as if it had been whispered but yesterday ; and can see, after a long dinner, the yellow summer sun throwing long shadows over the lawn before the dining-room windows, my poor mother and her company of ladies, sailing away to the music-room in old Boodle Hall. The Countess Dawdley was the great lady in our county, a portly lady who used to love crimson satin in those days, and birds-of-paradise. She was flaxen-haired, and the Regent once said she resembled one of King Charles's beauties.

When Sir John Todcaster used to begin his famous story of the exciseman (I shall not tell it here, for very good reasons), my poor mother used to turn to Lady Dawdley, and give that mystic signal at which all females rise from their chairs. Tufthunt the curate would spring from his seat, and be sure to be the first to open the door for the retreating ladies ; and my brother Tom and I, though remaining stoutly in our places, were speedily ejected from them by the governor's invariable remark, 'Tom and George, if you have had *quite* enough of wine, you had better go and join your mamma.' Yonder she marches, Heaven bless her ! through the old oak hall (how long the shadows of the antlers are on the wainscot, and the armour of Rollo Fitz-Boodle looks in the sunset as if it were emblazoned with rubies)—yonder she marches,

stately and tall, in her invariable pearl-coloured tabinet, followed by Lady Dawdley, blazing like a flamingo; next comes Lady Emily Tufthunt (she was Lady Emily Skinflinter), who will not for all the world take precedence of rich, vulgar, kind, good-humoured Mrs. *Colonel* Grogwater, as she would be called, with a yellow little husband from Madras, who first taught me to drink sangaree. He was a new arrival in our county, but paid nobly to the hounds, and occupied hospitably a house which was always famous for its hospitality—Sievely Hall (poor Bob Cullender ran through seven thousand a year before he was thirty years old). Once when I was a lad, Colonel Grogwater gave me two gold mohurs out of his desk for whist-markers, and I'm sorry to say I ran up from Eton and sold them both for seventy-three shillings at a shop in Cornhill. But to return to the ladies who are all this while kept waiting in the hall, and to their usual conversation after dinner.

Can any man forget how miserably flat it was? Five matrons sit on sofas, and talk in a subdued voice:—

First lady (mysteriously). 'My dear Lady Dawdley, do tell me about poor Susan Tuckett.'

Second lady. 'All three children are perfectly well, and I assure you as fine babies as I ever saw in my life. I made her give them Daffy's Elixir the first day; and it was the greatest mercy that I had some of Frederick's baby-clothes by me; for you know I had provided Susan with sets for one only, and really——'

Third lady. 'Of course one couldn't; and for my part I think your ladyship is a great deal too kind to these people. A little gardener's boy dressed in Lord Dawdley's frocks, indeed! I recollect that one at his christening had the sweetest lace in the world!'

Fourth lady. 'What do you think of this, ma'am—Lady Emily, I mean? I have just had it from Howell and James:—guipure, they call it. Isn't it an odd name for lace? And they charge me, upon my conscience, four guineas a yard!'

Third lady. 'My mother, when she came to Skinflinter, had lace upon her robe that cost sixty guineas a yard, ma'am! 'Twas sent from Malines direct by our relation, the Count d'Araignay.'

Fourth lady (aside). 'I thought she would not let the evening pass without talking of her Malines lace and her

Count d'Araignay. Odious people ! they don't spare their backs, but they pinch their——'

Here Tom upsets a coffee-cup over his white jean trousers, and another young gentleman bursts into a laugh, saying, 'By Jove, that's a good 'un !'

'George, my dear,' says mamma, 'had not you and your young friend better go into the garden ? But mind, no fruit, or Dr. Glauber must be called in again immediately !' and we all go, and in ten minutes I and my brother are fighting in the stables.

If instead of listening to the matrons and their discourse, we had taken the opportunity of attending to the conversation of the misses, we should have heard matter not a whit more interesting.

First Miss. 'They were all three in blue crape ; you never saw anything so odious. And I know for a certainty that they wore those dresses at Muddlebury, at the archery-ball, and I daresay they had them in town.'

Second Miss. 'Don't you think Jemima decidedly crooked ? And those fair complexions, they freckle so, that really Miss Blanche ought to be called Miss Brown.'

Third Miss. 'He, he, he !'

Fourth Miss. 'Don't you think Blanche is a pretty name ?'

First Miss. 'La ! do you think so, dear ? Why, it's my second name !'

Second Miss. 'Then I'm sure Captain Travers thinks it a *beautiful* name !'

Third Miss. 'He, he, he !'

Fourth Miss. 'What was he telling you at dinner that seemed to interest you so ?'

First Miss. 'O law, nothing !—that is, yes ! Charles—that is,—Captain Travers, is a sweet poet, and was reciting to me some lines that he had composed upon a faded violet :—

The odour from the flower is gone,
' That like thy——

like thy something, I forget what it was ; but his lines are sweet, and so original too ! I wish that horrid Sir John Todcaster had not begun his story of the exciseman, for Lady Fitz-Boodle always quits the table when he begins.'

Third Miss. 'Do you like those tufts that gentlemen wear sometimes on their chins?'

Second Miss. 'Nonsense, Mary!'

Third Miss. 'Well, I only asked, Jane. Frank thinks, you know, that he shall very soon have one, and puts bear's-grease on his chin every night.'

Second Miss. 'Mary, nonsense!'

Third Miss. 'Well, only ask him. You know he came to our dressing-room last night and took the pomatum away; and he says that when boys go to Oxford they always—'

First Miss. 'Oh, Heavens! have you heard the news about the Lancers? Charles—that is Captain Travers, told it me!'

Second Miss. 'Law! they won't go away before the ball, I hope!'

First Miss. 'No, but on the 15th they are to shave their moustachios! He says that Lord Tufto is in a perfect fury about it!'

Second Miss. 'And poor George Beardmore, too!' &c.

Here Tom upsets the coffee over his trousers, and the conversations end. I can recollect a dozen such, and ask any man of sense whether such talk amuses him?

Try again to speak to a young lady while you are dancing—what we call in this country—a quadrille. What nonsense do you invariably give and receive in return! No, I am a woman-scorner, and don't care to own it. I hate young ladies! Have I not been in love with several, and has any one of them ever treated me decently? I hate married women! Do they not hate me? and, simply because I smoke, try to draw their husbands away from my society? I hate dowagers! Have I not cause? Does not every dowager in London point to George Fitz-Boodle as to a dissolute wretch whom young and old should avoid?

And yet do not imagine that I have not loved. I have, and madly, many, many times! I am but eight-and-thirty,¹ not past the age of passion, and may very likely end by running off with an heiress—or a cook-maid (for who knows what strange freaks Love may choose to play in his own particular person? and I hold a man to be a mean creature who calculates about checking any such

¹ He is five-and-forty, if he is a day old.—O. Y.

sacred impulse as lawful love)—I say, though despising the sex in general for their conduct to me, I know of particular persons belonging to it who are worthy of all respect and esteem, and as such I beg leave to point out the particular young lady who is perusing these lines. Do not, dear madam, then imagine that if I knew you I should be disposed to sneer at you. Ah, no! Fitz-Boodle's bosom has tenderer sentiments than from his way of life you would fancy, and stern by rule is only too soft by practice. Shall I whisper to you the story of one or two of my attachments? All terminating fatally (not in death, but in disappointment, which, as it occurred, I used to imagine a thousand times more bitter than death, but from which one recovers somehow more readily than from the other-named complaint)—all, I say, terminating wretchedly to myself, as if some fatality pursued my desire to become a domestic character.

My first love—no, let us pass *that* over. Sweet one! thy name shall profane no hireling page. Sweet, sweet memory! Ah, ladies; those delicate hearts of yours have too felt the throb;—and between the last *ob* in the word throb and the words now written, I have passed a delicious period of perhaps an hour, perhaps a minute, I know not how long, thinking of that holy first love and of her who inspired it. How clearly every single incident of the passion is remembered by me! and yet 'twas long, long since; I was but a child then—a child at school—and, if the truth must be told, L—ra R—ggl—s (I would not write her whole name to be made one of the Marquess of Hertford's executors) was a woman full thirteen years older than myself; at the period of which I write she must have been at least five-and-twenty. She and her mother used to sell tarts, hardbake, lollipops, and other such simple comestibles, on Wednesdays and Saturdays (half-holidays) at a private school where I received the first rudiments of a classical education. I used to go and sit before her tray for hours, but I do not think the poor girl ever supposed any motive led me so constantly to her little stall beyond a vulgar longing for her tarts and her ginger-beer. Yes, even at that early period my actions were misrepresented, and the fatality which has oppressed my whole life began to show itself,—the purest passion was misinterpreted by her and my schoolfellows, and they thought

I was actuated by simple gluttony. They nicknamed me Alicompayne.

Well, be it so. Laugh at early passion ye who will; a highborn boy madly in love with a lowly ginger-beer girl! She married afterwards, took the name of Latter, and now keeps with her old husband a turnpike, through which I often ride; but I can recollect her bright and rosy of a sunny summer afternoon, her red cheeks shaded by a battered straw bonnet, her tarts and ginger-beer upon a neat white cloth before her, mending blue worsted stockings until the young gentlemen should interrupt her by coming to buy.

Many persons will call this description low; I do not envy them their gentility, and have always observed through life (as, to be sure, every other *gentleman* has observed as well as myself) that it is your *parvenu* who stickles most for what he calls the genteel, and has the most squeamish abhorrence for what is frank and natural. Let us pass at once, however, as all the world must be pleased, to a recital of an affair which occurred in the very best circles of society as they are called, viz., my next unfortunate attachment.

It did not occur for several years after that simple and platonic passion just described, for though they may talk of youth as the season of romance, it has always appeared to me that there are no beings in the world so entirely unromantic and selfish as certain young English gentlemen from the age of fifteen to twenty. The oldest Lovelace about town is scarcely more hard-hearted and scornful than they; they ape all sorts of selfishness and *rouerie*; they aim at excelling at cricket, at billiards, at rowing, and drinking, and set more store by a red coat and a neat pair of top-boots than by any other glory. A young fellow staggers into college-chapel of a morning, and communicates to all his friends that he was '*so cut last night*,' with the greatest possible pride. He makes a joke of having sisters and a kind mother at home who loves him; and if he speaks of his father, it is with a knowing sneer to say that he has a tailor's and a horse-dealer's bill that will surprise 'the old governor.' He would be ashamed of being in love. I, in common with my kind, had these affectations, and my perpetual custom of smoking added not a little to my reputation as an accomplished *roué*.

What came of this custom in the army and at college, the reader has already heard. Alas! in life it went no better with me, and many pretty chances I had went off in that accursed smoke.

After quitting the army in the abrupt manner stated, I passed some short time at home, and was tolerated by my mother-in-law, because I had formed an attachment to a young lady of good connexions and with a considerable fortune, which was really very nearly becoming mine. Mary M'Alister was the only daughter of Colonel M'Alister, late of the Blues, and Lady Susan his wife. Her ladyship was no more; and, indeed, of no family compared to ours (which has refused a peerage any time these two hundred years), but being an earl's daughter and a Scotch woman, Lady Emily Fitz-Boodle did not fail to consider her highly. Lady Susan was daughter of the late Admiral Earl of Marlingspike and Baron Plumduff. The colonel, Miss M'Alister's father, had a good estate, of which his daughter was the heiress, and as I fished her out of the water upon a pleasure party, and swam with her to shore, we became naturally intimate, and Colonel M'Alister forgot, on account of the service rendered to him, the dreadful reputation for profligacy which I enjoyed in the country.

Well, to cut a long story short, which is told here merely for the moral at the end of it, I should have been Fitz-Boodle M'Alister at this minute most probably, and master of four thousand a year, but for the fatal cigar-box. I bear Mary no malice in saying that she was a high-spirited little girl, loving, before all things, her own way; nay, perhaps, do not from long habit and indulgence in tobacco-smoking appreciate the delicacy of female organizations which were oftentimes most painfully affected by it. She was a keen-sighted little person, and soon found that the world had belied poor George Fitz-Boodle, who, instead of being the cunning monster people supposed him to be, was a simple, reckless, good-humoured, honest fellow, marvellously addicted to smoking, idleness, and telling the truth. She called me Orson, and I was happy enough on the 14th February, in the year 18— (it's of no consequence), to send her such a pretty little copy of verses about Orson and *Valentine*, in which the rude habits of the savage man were shown to be overcome by the polished graces of his kind and brilliant conqueror, that she was

fairly overcome, and said to me, 'George Fitz-Boodle, if you give up smoking for a year I will marry you.'

I swore I would, of course, and went home and flung four pounds of Hudson's cigars, two meerschaum pipes that had cost me ten guineas at the establishment of Mr. Gattie at Oxford, a tobacco-bag that Lady Fitz-Boodle had given me *before* her marriage with my father (it was the only present that I ever had from her or any member of the Flintskinner family), and some choice packets of Varinas and Syrian, into the lake in Boodle Park. The weapon amongst them all which I most regretted was—will it be believed?—the little black doodheen which had been the cause of the quarrel between Lord Martingale and me. However, it went along with the others. I would not allow my groom to have so much as a cigar, lest I should be tempted hereafter; and the consequence was that a few days after many fat carps and tenches in the lake (I must confess 'twas no bigger than a pond) nibbled at the tobacco, and came floating on their backs on the top of the water quite intoxicated. My conversion made some noise in the county, being emphasized as it were by this fact of the fish. I can't tell you with what pangs I kept my resolution; but keep it I did for some time.

With so much beauty and wealth, Mary M'Alister had of course many suitors, and among them was the young Lord Dawdley, whose mamma has previously been described in her gown of red satin. As I used to thrash Dawdley at school, I thrashed him in after life in love, and he put up with his disappointment pretty well, and came after a while and shook hands with me, telling me of the bets that there were in the county, where the whole story was known, for and against me. For the fact is, as I must own, that Mary M'Alister, the queerest, frankest of women, made no secret of the agreement, or the cause of it.

'I did not care a penny for Orson,' she said, 'but he would go on writing me such dear pretty verses that at last I couldn't help saying yes. But if he breaks his promise to me, I declare, upon my honour, I'll break mine, and nobody's heart will be broken either.'

This was the perfect fact, as I must confess, and I declare that it was only because she amused me and delighted me, and provoked me, and made me laugh very

much, and because, no doubt, she was very rich, that I had any attachment for her.

‘For Heaven’s sake, George,’ my father said to me, as I quitted home to follow my beloved to London, ‘remember that you are a younger brother and have a lovely girl and four thousand a year within a year’s reach of you. Smoke as much as you like, my boy, after marriage,’ added the old gentleman, knowingly (as if *he*, honest soul, after his second marriage, dared drink an extra pint of wine without my lady’s permission!) ‘but eschew the tobacco-shops till then.’

I went to London resolving to act upon the paternal advice, and oh! how I longed for the day when I should be married, vowing in my secret soul that I would light a cigar as I walked out of St. George’s, Hanover Square.

Well, I came to London, and so carefully avoided smoking that I would not even go into Hudson’s shop to pay his bill, and as smoking was not the fashion then among young men as (thank Heaven!) it is now, I had not many temptations from my friends’ examples in my clubs or elsewhere; only little Dawdley began to smoke as if to spite me. He had never done so before, but confessed—the rascal!—that he enjoyed a cigar now, if it were but to mortify me. But I took to other and more dangerous excitements, and upon the nights when not in attendance upon Mary M’Alister, might be found in very dangerous proximity to a polished mahogany table, round which claret-bottles circulated a great deal too often, or, worse still, to a table covered with green cloth and ornamented with a couple of wax-candles and a couple of packs of cards, and four gentlemen playing the enticing game of whist. Likewise, I came to carry a snuff-box, and to consume in secret huge quantities of rappee.

For ladies’ society I was even then disinclined, hating and despising small-talk, and dancing, and hot routs, and vulgar scrambles for suppers. I never could understand the pleasure of acting the part of lackey to a dowager, and standing behind her chair, or bustling through the crowd for her carriage. I always found an opera too long by two acts, and have repeatedly fallen asleep in the presence of Mary M’Alister herself, sitting at the back of the box shaded by the huge beret of her old aunt, Lady Betty Plumduff; and many a time has Dawdley, with Miss

M'Alister on his arm, wakened me up at the close of the entertainment in time to offer my hand to Lady Betty, and lead the ladies to their carriage. If I attended her occasionally to any ball or party of pleasure, I went, it must be confessed, with clumsy, ill-disguised ill humour. Good Heavens! have I often and often thought in the midst of a song, or the very thick of a ball-room, can people prefer this to a book and a sofa, and a dear, dear cigar-box, from thy stores, O charming Mariana Woodville! Deprived of my favourite plant, I grew sick in mind and body, moody, sarcastic, and discontented.

Such a state of things could not long continue, nor could Miss M'Alister continue to have much attachment for such a sullen, ill-conditioned creature as I then was. She used to make me wild with her wit and her sarcasm, nor have I ever possessed the readiness to parry or reply to those fine points of woman's wit, and she treated me the more mercilessly as she saw that I could not resist her.

Well, the polite reader must remember a great fête that was given at B—— House, some years back, in honour of his Highness the Hereditary Prince of Kalbsbraten-Pumpernickel, who was then in London on a visit to his illustrious relatives. It was a fancy ball, and the poems of Scott being at that time all the fashion, Mary was to appear in the character of the 'Lady of the Lake,' old M'Alister making a very tall and severe-looking harper; Dawdley, a most insignificant Fitzjames; and your humble servant a stalwart manly Roderick Dhu. We were to meet at B—— House, at twelve o'clock, and as I had no fancy to drive through the town in my cab dressed in a kilt and filibeg, I agreed to take a seat in Dawdley's carriage, and to dress at his house in Mayfair. At eleven I left a very pleasant bachelors' party, growling to quit them and the honest, jovial claret bottle, in order to scrape and cut capers like a harlequin from the theatre. When I arrived at Dawdley's, I mounted to a dressing-room, and began to array myself in my cursed costume.

The art of costuming was by no means so well understood in those days as it has been since, and mine was out of all correctness. I was made to sport an enormous plume of black ostrich feathers, such as never was worn by any Highland chief, and had a huge tiger-skin sporran to dangle like an apron before innumerable yards of plaid petticoat. The

tartan cloak was outrageously hot and voluminous ; it was the dog-days, and all these things I was condemned to wear in the midst of a crowd of a thousand people !

Dawdley sent up word as I was dressing, that his dress had not arrived, and he took my cab, and drove off in a rage to his tailor.

There was no hurry, I thought, to make a fool of myself ; so having put on a pair of plaid trews, and very neat pumps with shoe-buckles, my courage failed me as to the rest of the dress, and taking down one of his dressing-gowns, I went downstairs to the study, to wait until he should arrive.

The windows of the pretty room were open, and a snug sofa with innumerable cushions, drawn towards one of them. A great tranquil moon was staring into the chamber, in which stood, amidst books and all sorts of bachelors' lumber, a silver tray with a couple of tall Venice glasses, and a bottle of Maraschino bound with straw. I can see now the twinkle of the liquor in the moonshine, as I poured it into the glass ; and I swallowed two or three little cups of it, for my spirits were downcast. Close to the tray of Maraschino stood—must I say it ?—a box, a mere box of cedar, bound rudely together with pink paper, branded with the name of 'HUDSON' on the side, and bearing on the cover the arms of Spain. I thought I would just take up the box, and look in it.

Ah, Heaven ! there they were—a hundred and fifty of them, in calm, comfortable rows, lovingly side by side they lay, with the great moon shining down upon them—thin at the tip, full in the waist, elegantly round and full, a little spot here and there shining upon them—beauty spots upon the cheek of Sylvia. The house was quite quiet. Dawdley always smoked in his room ;—I had not smoked for four months and eleven days.

When Lord Dawdley came into the study, he did not make any remarks ; and, oh, how easy my heart felt ! He was dressed in his green and boots, after Westall's picture, correctly.

'It's time to be off, George,' said he ; ' they told me you were dressed long ago. Come up, my man, and get ready.'

I rushed up into the dressing-room, and madly dashed my head and arms into a pool of eau de Cologne. I drank,

I believe, a tumbler-full of it. I called for my clothes, and, strange to say, they were gone. My servant brought them, however, saying that he had put them away—making some stupid excuse. I put them on, not heeding them much, for I was half tipsy with the excitement of the ci—, of the smo—, of what had taken place in Dawdley's study, and with the Maraschino and the eau de Cologne I had drunk.

'What a fine odour of lavender water !' said Dawdley, as we rode in the carriage.

I put my head out of the window and shrieked out a laugh ; but made no other reply.

'What's the joke, George ?' said Dawdley ; 'did I say anything witty ?'

'No,' cried I, yelling still more wildly ; 'nothing more witty than usual.'

'Don't be severe, George,' said he, with a mortified air ; and we drove on to B—— House.

There must have been something strange and wild in my appearance, and these awful black plumes, as I passed through the crowd ; for I observed people looking and making a strange nasal noise (it is called sniffing, and for which I have no other more delicate term), and making way as I pushed on ; but I moved forward very fiercely, for the wine, the Maraschino, the eau de Cologne, and the— the excitement had rendered me almost wild ; and at length I arrived at the place where my lovely Lady of the Lake and her Harper stood. How beautiful she looked,—all eyes were upon her as she stood blushing. When she saw me, however, her countenance assumed an appearance of alarm. 'Good Heavens, George !' she said, stretching her hand to me ; 'what makes you look so wild and pale ?' I advanced, and was going to take her hand, when she dropped it with a scream.

'Ah—ah—ah !' she said ; 'Mr. Fitz-Boodle, you've been smoking !'

There was an immense laugh from four hundred people round about us, and the scoundrelly Dawdley joined in the yell. I rushed furiously out, and as I passed hurtled over the fat Hereditary Prince of Kalbsbraten-Pumpernickel.

'Es riecht hier ungeheuer stark von Tabak !' I heard his

highness say, as I madly flung myself through the aides de camp.

The next day Mary M'Alister, in a note full of the most odious good sense and sarcasm, reminded me of our agreement; said that she was quite convinced that we were not by any means fitted for one another, and begged me to consider myself henceforth quite free. The little wretch had the impertinence to send me a dozen boxes of cigars, which, she said, would console me for my lost love; as she was perfectly certain that I was not mercenary, and that I loved tobacco better than any woman in the world.

I believe she was right, though I have never to this day been able to pardon the scoundrelly stratagem by which Dawdley robbed me of a wife and won one himself. As I was lying on his sofa, looking at the moon and lost in a thousand happy contemplations, Lord Dawdley, returning from the tailor's, saw me smoking at my leisure. On entering his dressing-room, a horrible treacherous thought struck him. 'I must not betray my friend,' said he; 'but in love all is fair, and he shall betray himself.' There were my tartans, my cursed feathers, my tiger-skin sporran, upon the sofa.

He called up my groom; he made the rascal put on all my clothes, and, giving him a guinea and four cigars, bade him lock himself into the little pantry and smoke them *without taking the clothes off*. John did so, and was very ill in consequence, and so when I came to B—— House, my clothes were redolent of tobacco, and I lost lovely Mary M'Alister.

I am godfather to one of Lady Dawdley's boys, and hers is the only house where I am allowed to smoke unmolested; but I have never been able to admire Dawdley, a sly, *sournois*, spiritless, lily-livered fellow, that took his name off all his clubs the year he married.

'I am sick of this squeamish English world,' said I, in bitter scorn, as I sat in my lonely lodgings smoking Mary M'Alister's cigars: 'a curse upon their affectations of propriety and silly obedience to the dictates of whimpering woman! I will away to some other country where thought is free, and honest men have their way. I will have no more of your rose-water passion, or cringing drawing-room tenderness. Pshaw! is George Fitz-Boodle to be bound up in the scented ringlets of a woman, or made to fetch and carry her reticule? No, I will go where women shall

obey and not command me. I will be a Sheikh, and my wife shall cook my couscous, and dance before me, and light my narghilé. I will be a painted savage spearing the fish, and striking the deer, and my wife shall sing my great actions to me as I smoke my calumet in my lodge. Away! land of dowagers and milksops, Fitz-Boodle disowns you; he will wander to some other clime, where man is respected, and woman takes her proper rank in the creation, as the pretty smiling slave she would be.'

I received at this time, in an abrupt enclosure from my father, £120, being a quarter's income, and a polite intimation from Lady Fitz-Boodle, that as I had disappointed every one of my parents' expectations (*she* my parent! faugh!) I must never look to the slightest pecuniary aid from them. Such a sum would not enable me to travel across the Atlantic or to the shores of the Red Sea, as was my first intention; I determined, therefore, to visit a country where, if woman was still too foolishly worshipped, at least smoking was tolerated, and took my departure at the Tower Stairs for Rotterdam and the Rhine.

There were no incidents of the voyage worth recounting, nor am I so absurd as to attempt to give the reader an account of Holland or any other country. This memoir is purely personal: and relates rather to what I suffered than to what I saw. Not a word then about Cologne and the eleven thousand British virgins, whom a storm drove into that port, and who were condemned, as I am pleased to think, to a most merited death. Ah, Mary M'Alister! in my rage and fury I wished that there had been eleven thousand and one spinsters so destroyed. Ah! Minna Löwe, Jewess as thou wert, thou meritedst no better a fate than that which overtook those Christian damsels.

Minna Löwe was the daughter of Moses Löwe, banker at Bonn. I passed through the town last year, fifteen years after the event I am about to relate, and heard that Moses was imprisoned for forgery and fraudulent bankruptcy. He merited the punishment which the merciful Prussian law inflicted on him.

Minna was the most beautiful creature that my eyes ever lighted on. Sneer not, ye Christian maidens; but the fact was so. I saw her for the first time seated at a window covered with golden vine-leaves, with

grapes just turning to purple, and tendrils twisting in the most fantastical arabesques. The leaves cast a pretty chequered shadow over her sweet face, and the simple, thin, white muslin gown in which she was dressed. She had bare white arms, and a blue riband confined her little waist. She was knitting, as all German women do, whether of the Jewish sort or otherwise; and in the shadow of the room sat her sister Emma, a powerful woman with a powerful voice. Emma was at the piano, singing, 'Herz, mein Herz, warum so trau-au-rig?'—singing much out of tune.

I had come to change one of Coutts's circulars at Löwe's bank, and was looking for the door of the *caisse*.

'*Links, mein Herr!*' said Minna Löwe, making the gentlest inclination with her pretty little head; and blushing ever so little, and raising up tenderly a pair of heavy blue eyes, and then dropping them again, overcome by the sight of the stranger. And no wonder; I was a sight worth contemplating then,—I had golden hair which fell gracefully over my shoulders, and a slim waist (where are you now, slim waist and golden hair?), and a pair of brown moustachios that curled gracefully under a firm Roman nose, and a tuft to my chin that could not but vanquish *any* woman. 'Links, mein Herr,' said lovely Minna Löwe.

That little word *links* dropped upon my wounded soul like balm. There is nothing in *links*; it is not a pretty word. Minna Löwe simply told me to turn to the left, when I was debating between that side and its opposite, in order to find the cash-room door. Any other person might have said *links* (or *rechts* for that matter), and would not have made the slightest impression upon me; but Minna's full red lips, as they let slip the monosyllable, wore a smile so tender and uttered it with such inconceivable sweetness, that I was overcome at once. 'Sweet bell!' I could have said, 'tinkle that dulcet note for ever; links, clinks, linx! I love the chime. It soothes and blesses me.' All this I could have said, and much more, had I had my senses about me, and had I been a proficient in the German language; but I could not speak, both from ignorance and emotion. I blushed, stuttered, took off my cap, made an immensely foolish bow, and began forthwith fumbling at the door-handle.

The reason why I have introduced the name of this siren

is to show that if tobacco in a former unlucky instance has proved my enemy, in the present case it was my firmest friend. I, the descendant of the Norman Fitz-Boodle, the relative of kings and emperors, might, but for tobacco, have married the daughter of Moses Löwe, the Jew forger and convict of Bonn. I would have done it; for I hold the man a slave who calculates in love, and who thinks about prudence when his heart is in question. Men marry their cook-maids and the world looks down upon them. *Ne sit ancillae amor pudori!* I exclaim with a notorious poet, if you heartily and entirely love your cook-maid, you are a fool and a coward not to wed her. What more can you want than to have your heart filled up? Can a duchess do more? You talk of the difference of rank and the decencies of society. Away, sir! love is divine, and knows not your paltry, worldly calculations. It is not love you worship, O heartless, silly calculator! it is the interest of thirty thousand pounds in the three per cents, and the blessing of a genteel mother-in-law in Harley Street, and the ineffable joy of snug dinners, and a butler behind your chair. Fool! love is eternal, butlers and mothers-in-law are perishable: you have but the enjoyment of your three per cents for forty years; and then, what do they avail you? But if you believe that she whom you choose, and to whom your heart clings, is to be your soul's companion, not now merely, but for *ever and ever*; then what a paltry item of money or time has deterred you from your happiness, what a miserable penny-wise economist you have been!

And here, if, as a man of the world, I might be allowed to give advice to fathers and mothers of families, it would be this: young men fall in love with people of a lower rank, and they are not strong enough to resist the dread of disinherittance, or of the world's scorn, or of the cursed tyrant gentility, and dare not marry the woman they love above all. But if prudence is strong, passion is strong too, and principle is not, and women (Heaven keep them!) are weak. We all know what happens then. Prudent papas and mammas say, 'George will sow his wild oats soon, he will be tired of that odious woman one day, and we'll get a good marriage for him: meanwhile it is best to hush the matter up and pretend to know nothing about it.' But suppose George does the only honest thing in his power,

and marries the woman he loves above all ; *then* what a cry you have from parents and guardians, what shrieks from aunts and sisters, what excommunications and disinheriting ! ‘ What a weak fool George is ! ’ say his male friends in the clubs ; and no hand of sympathy is held out to poor *Mrs.* George, who is never forgiven, but shunned like a plague, and sneered at by a relentless pharisaical world until death sets her free. As long as she is *unmarried*, avoid her if you will ; but as soon as she is married, go ! be kind to her, and comfort her, and pardon and forget, if you can ! And lest some charitable people should declare that I am setting up here an apology for vice, let me here, and by way of precaution, flatly contradict them, and declare that I only would offer a *plea for marriage*.

But where has Minna Löwe been left during this page of disquisition ? Blushing under the vine-leaves positively, whilst I was thanking my stars that she never became *Mrs.* George Fitz-Boodle. And yet who knows what thou mightst have become, Minna, had such a lot fallen to thee ? She was too pretty and innocent-looking to have been by nature that artful, intriguing hussy that education made her, and that my experience found her. The case was simply this, not a romantic one by any means.

At this very juncture, perhaps, it will be as well to pause, and leave the world to wait for a month until it learns the result of the loves of Minna Löwe and George Fitz-Boodle. I have other tales still more interesting in store ; and though I have never written a line until now, I doubt not before long to have excited such a vast sympathy in my favour, that I shall become as popular as the oldest (I mean the handsomest and most popular) literary characters of this or any other age or country. Artists and print-publishers, desirous of taking my portrait, may as well, therefore, begin sending in their proposals to Mr. Nickisson ; nor shall I so much look to a high remuneration for sitting (egad ! it is a frightful operation), as to a clever and skilful painter, who must likewise be a decently bred and companionable person.

Nor is it merely upon matters relating to myself (for egotism I hate, and the reader will remark that there is scarcely a single ‘ I ’ in the foregoing pages) that I propose to speak. Next month, for instance (besides the continua-

tion of my own and other people's memoirs), I shall acquaint the public with a discovery which is intensely interesting to all fathers of families : I have in my eye *three new professions* which a gentleman may follow with credit and profit, which are to this day unknown, and which, in the present difficult times, cannot fail to be eagerly seized upon.

Before submitting them to public competition, I will treat privately with parents and guardians, or with young men of good education and address ; such only will suit

G. S. F.-B.

FITZ-BOODLE'S PROFESSIONS

BEING APPEALS TO THE UNEMPLOYED YOUNGER SONS OF THE NOBILITY

[*Fraser's Magazine*, July, 1842.]

FIRST PROFESSION

THE fair and honest proposition which I put forth at the end of my last (and first) appeal to the British public, and in which I offered to communicate privately with parents and guardians, relative to three new and lucrative professions which I had discovered, has, I find from the publisher, elicited not one single inquiry from those personages, who I can't but think are very little careful of their children's welfare to allow such a chance to be thrown away. It is not for myself I speak, as my conscience proudly tells me ; for though I actually gave up Ascot in order to be in the way should any father of a family be inclined to treat with me regarding my discoveries, yet I am grieved, not on my own account, but on theirs, and for the wretched penny-wise policy that has held them back.

That they must feel an interest in my announcement is unquestionable. Look at the way in which the public prints of all parties have noticed my appearance in the character of a literary man ! Putting aside my personal narrative, look at the offer I made to the nation,—a choice of no less than three new professions ! Suppose I had invented as many new kinds of butcher's meat ; does any one pretend that the world, tired as it is of the perpetual recurrence of beef, mutton, veal, cold beef, cold veal, cold mutton, hashed ditto, would not have jumped eagerly at the delightful intelligence that their old, stale, stupid meals were about to be varied at last ?

Of course people would have come forward. I should have had deputations from Mr. Giblets and the fashionable

butchers of this world ; petitions would have poured in from Whitechapel salesmen ; the speculators panting to know the discovery ; the cautious with stock in hand eager to bribe me to silence and prevent the certain depreciation of the goods which they already possessed. I should have dealt with them, not greedily or rapaciously, but on honest principles of fair barter. 'Gentlemen,' I should have said, or rather, 'Gents,' which affectionate diminutive is, I am given to understand, at present much in use among commercial persons, 'Gents, my researches, my genius, or my good fortune, have brought me to the valuable discovery about which you are come to treat. Will you purchase it outright, or will you give the discoverer an honest share of the profits resulting from your speculation ? My position in the world puts *me* out of the power of executing the vast plan I have formed, but 'twill be a certain fortune to him who engages in it ; and why should not I, too, participate in that fortune ?'

Such would have been my manner of dealing with the world, too, with regard to my discovery of the new professions. Does not the world want new professions ? Are there not thousands of well-educated men panting, struggling, pushing, starving, in the old ones ? Grim tenants of chambers looking out for attorneys who never come ?—wretched physicians practising the stale joke of being called out of church until people no longer think fit even to laugh or to pity ? Are there not hoary-headed midshipmen, antique ensigns growing mouldy upon fifty years' half-pay ? Nay, are there not men who would pay anything to be employed rather than remain idle ? But such is the glut of professionals, the horrible cut-throat competition among them, that there is no chance for one in a thousand, be he ever so willing, or brave, or clever : in the great ocean of life he makes a few strokes, and puffs, and sputters, and sinks, and the innumerable waves overwhelm him and he is heard of no more.

Walking to my banker's t'other day—and I pledge my sacred honour this story is true—I met a young fellow whom I had known *attaché* to an embassy abroad, a young man of tolerable parts, unwearied patience, with some fortune, too, and, moreover, allied to a noble Whig family, whose interest had procured him his appointment to the legation at Krähwinkel, where I knew him. He remained for ten

years a diplomatic character ; he was the working-man of the legation : he sent over the most diffuse translations of the German papers for the use of the Foreign Secretary ; he signed passports with most astonishing ardour ; he exiled himself for ten long years in a wretched German town, dancing attendance at court-balls and paying no end of money for uniforms. And for what ? At the end of the ten years—during which period of labour he never received a single shilling from the Government which employed him (rascally spendthrift of a Government, *va !*),—he was offered the paid attaché-ship to the court of H.M. the King of the Mosquito Islands, and refused that appointment a week before the Whig ministry retired. Then he knew that there was no further chance for him, and incontinently quitted the diplomatic service for ever, and I have no doubt will sell his uniform a bargain. The Government had *him* a bargain certainly, nor is he by any means the first person who has been sold at that price.

Well, my worthy friend met me in the street and informed me of these facts with a smiling countenance,—which I thought a masterpiece of diplomacy. Fortune had been belabouring and kicking him for ten whole years, and here he was grinning in my face : could Monsieur de Talleyrand have acted better ? ‘ I have given up diplomacy,’ said Protocol, quite simply and good-humouredly, ‘ for between you and me, my good fellow, it’s a very slow profession ; sure perhaps, but slow. But though I gained no actual pecuniary remuneration in the service, I have learned all the languages in Europe, which will be invaluable to me in my new profession—the mercantile one—in which, directly I looked out for a post, I found one.’

‘ What ! and a good pay ? ’ said I.

‘ Why, no ; that’s absurd, you know. No young men, strangers to business, are paid much to speak of. Besides, I don’t look to a paltry clerk’s pay. Some day, when thoroughly acquainted with the business (I shall learn it in about seven years), I shall go into a good house with my capital and become junior partner.’

‘ And meanwhile ? ’

‘ Meanwhile I conduct the foreign correspondence of the eminent house of Jam, Ram, and Johnson ; and very heavy it is, I can tell you. From nine till six every day, except foreign post days, and then from nine till eleven ; dirty

dark court to sit in ; snobs to talk to,—great change, as you may fancy.'

' And you do all this for nothing ? '

' I do it to learn the business ; ' and so saying Protocol gave me a knowing nod and went his way.

Good Heavens ! I thought, and is this a true story ? Are there hundreds of young men in a similar situation at the present day, giving away the best years of their youth for the sake of a mere windy hope of something in old age, and dying before they come to the goal ? In seven years he hopes to have a business, and then to have the pleasure of risking his money ? He will be admitted into some great house as a particular favour, and three months after the house will fail. Has it not happened to a thousand of our acquaintance ? I thought I would run after him and tell him about the new professions that I have invented.

' Oh ! aye ! those you wrote about in *Fraser's Magazine*. Egad ! George, Necessity makes strange fellows of us all. Who would ever have thought of you *spelling*, much more writing ? '

' Never mind that. Will you, if I tell you of a new profession that, with a little cleverness and instruction from me, you may bring to a most successful end—will you, I say, make me a fair return ? '

' My dear creature,' replied young Protocol, ' what nonsense you talk ! I saw that very humbug in the Magazine. You say you have made a great discovery—very good ; you puff your discovery—very right ; you ask money for it—nothing can be more reasonable ; and then you say that you intend to make your discovery public in the next number of the Magazine. Do you think I will be such a fool as to give you money for a thing which I can have next month for nothing ? Good-bye, George, my boy ; the *next* discovery you make I'll tell you how to get a better price for it : ' and with this the fellow walked off, looking supremely knowing and clever.

This tale of the person I have called Protocol is not told without a purpose, you may be sure. In the first place, it shows what are the reasons that nobody has made application to me concerning the new professions, namely, because I have passed my word to make them known in this Magazine, which persons may have for the purchasing,

stealing, borrowing, or hiring, and, therefore, they will never think of applying personally to me. And, secondly, his story proves also my assertion, viz. that all professions are most cruelly crowded at present, and that men will make the most absurd outlay and sacrifices for the smallest chance of success at some future period. Well, then, I will be a benefactor to my race, if I cannot be to one single member of it, whom I love better than most men. What I have discovered I will make known; there shall be no shilly-shallying work here, no circumlocution, no bottle-conjuring business. But oh! I wish for all our sakes that I had had an opportunity to impart the secret to one or two persons only; for, after all, but one or two can live in the manner I would suggest. And when the discovery is made known, I am sure ten thousand will try. The rascals! I can see their brass plates gleaming over scores of doors. Competition will ruin my professions, as it has all others.

It must be premised that the two first professions are intended for gentlemen, and gentlemen only—men of birth and education. No others could support the parts which they will be called upon to play.

And, likewise, it must be honestly confessed that these professions have, to a certain degree, been exercised before. Do not cry out at this and say it is no discovery! I say it *is* a discovery. It is a discovery, if I show you—a gentleman—a profession which you may exercise without derogation or loss of standing, with certain profit, nay, possibly with honour, and of which until the reading of this present page, you never thought but as of a calling beneath your rank and quite below your reach. Sir, I do not mean to say that I create a profession. I cannot create gold; but if, when discovered, I find the means of putting it in your pocket, do I or do I not deserve credit?

I see you sneer contemptuously when I mention to you the word AUCTIONEER. ‘Is this all,’ you say, ‘that this fellow brags and prates about? An auctioneer forsooth! he might as well have “invented” chimney-sweeping!’

No such thing. A little boy of seven, be he ever so low of birth, can do this as well as you. Do you suppose that little stolen Master Montague made a better sweeper than the lowest-bred chummy that yearly commemorates his release? No, sir. And he might have been ever so much

a genius or a gentleman, and not have been able to make his trade respectable.

But all such trades as can be rendered decent the aristocracy has adopted one by one. At first they followed their profession of arms, flouting all others as unworthy, and thinking it ungentlemanlike to know how to read or write. They did not go into the church in very early days till the money to be got from the church was strong enough to tempt them. It is but of later years that they have condescended to go to the bar, and since the same time only that we see some of them following trades. I know an English lord's son who is, or was, a wine-merchant (he may have been a bankrupt for what I know). As for bankers, several partners in banking-houses have four balls to their coronets, and I have no doubt that another sort of banking, viz. that practised by gentlemen who lend small sums of money upon deposited securities, will be one day followed by the noble order, so that they may have four balls on their coronets and carriages, and three in front of their shops.

Yes, the nobles come peoplewards as the people, on the other hand, rise and mingle with the nobles. With the *plebs*, of course, Fitz-Boodle, in whose veins flows the blood of a thousand kings, can have nothing to do ; but, watching the progress of the world, 'tis impossible to deny that the good old days of our race are passed away. We want money still as much as ever we did ; but we cannot go down from our castles with horse and sword and waylay fat merchants—no, no, confounded new policemen and the assize-courts prevent that. Younger brothers cannot be pages to noble houses, as of old they were, serving gentle dames without disgrace, handing my lord's rose-water to wash, or holding his stirrup as he mounted for the chase. A page, forsooth ! A pretty figure would George Fitz-Boodle, or any other man of fashion cut, in a jacket covered with sugar-loafed buttons and handing in penny-post notes on a silver tray. The *plebs* have robbed us of *that* trade among others, nor, I confess, do I much grudge them their *trouvaille*. Neither can we collect together a few scores of free-lances, like honest Hugh Calverly in the Black Prince's time, or brave Harry Butler of Wallenstein's dragoons, and serve this or that prince, Peter the Cruel or Henry of Trastamare, Gustavus or the Emperor, at our leisure ; or, in default of service, fight and rob on our own gallant account, as the

good gentlemen of old did. Alas ! no. In South America or Texas, perhaps, a man might have a chance that way ; but in the ancient world no man can fight except in the king's service (and a mighty bad service that is too), and the lowest European sovereign, were it Baldomero Espartero himself, would think nothing of seizing the best born Condottiere chief that ever drew sword, and shooting him down like the vulgarest deserter.

What, then, is to be done ? We must discover fresh fields of enterprise—of peaceable and commercial enterprise in a peaceful and commercial age. I say, then, that the auctioneer's pulpit has never yet been ascended by a scion of the aristocracy, and am prepared to prove that they might scale it, and do so with dignity and profit.

For the auctioneer's pulpit is just the peculiar place where a man of social refinement, of elegant wit, of polite perceptions, can bring his wit, his eloquence, his taste, and his experience of life, most delightfully into play. It is not like the bar, where the better and higher qualities of a man of fashion find no room for exercise. In defending John Jorrocks in an action of trespass, for cutting down a stick in Sam Snooks's field, what powers of mind do you require ? —powers of mind, that is, which Mr. Serjeant Snorter, a butcher's son with a great loud voice, a sizar at Cambridge, a wrangler, and so forth, does not possess as well as yourself ? Snorter has never been in decent society in his life. He thinks the bar-mess the most fashionable assemblage in Europe, and the jokes of ' grand day ' the *ne plus ultra* of wit. Snorter lives near Russell Square, eats beef and Yorkshire-pudding, is a judge of port wine, is in all social respects your inferior. Well, it is ten to one but in the case of Snooks *v.* Jorrocks, before mentioned, he will be a better advocate than you ; he knows the law of the case entirely, and better probably than you. He can speak long, loud, to the point, grammatically—more grammatically than you, no doubt, will condescend to do. In the case of Snooks *v.* Jorrocks he is all that can be desired. And so about dry disputes respecting real property, he knows the law ; and, beyond this, has no more need to be a gentleman than my body-servant has—who, by the way, from constant intercourse with the best society, is almost a gentleman. But this is apart from the question.

Now, in the matter of auctioneering, this, I apprehend,

is not the case, and I assert that a high-bred gentleman, with good powers of mind and speech, must, in such a profession, make a fortune. I do not mean in all auctioneering matters. I do not mean that such a person should be called upon to sell the goodwill of a public-house or discourse about the value of the beer-barrels, or bars with pewter fittings, or the beauty of a trade doing a stroke of so many hogsheads a week. I do not ask a gentleman to go down and sell pigs, ploughs, and cart-horses, at Stoke Pogis; or to enlarge at the Auction Rooms, Wapping, upon the beauty of the *Lively Sally* schooner. These articles of commerce or use can be better appreciated by persons in a different rank of life to his.

But there are a thousand cases in which a gentleman only can do justice to the sale of objects which the necessity or convenience of the genteel world may require to change hands. All articles, properly called, of taste should be put under his charge. Pictures,—he is a travelled man, has seen and judged the best galleries of Europe, and can speak of them as a common person cannot. For, mark you, you must have the confidence of your society, you must be able to be familiar with them, to plant a happy *mot* in a graceful manner, to appeal to my lord or the duchess in such a modest, easy, pleasant way as that her grace should not be hurt by your allusion to her—nay, amused (like the rest of the company) by the manner in which it was done.

What is more disgusting than the familiarity of a snob? What more loathsome than the swaggering quackery of some present holders of the hammer? There was a late sale, for instance, which made some noise in the world (I mean the late Lord Gimcrack's, at Dilberry Hill). Ah! what an opportunity was lost there! I declare solemnly that I believe, but for the absurd quackery and braggadocio of the advertisements, much more money would have been bid; people were kept away by the vulgar trumpeting of the auctioneer, and could not help thinking the things were worthless that were so outrageously lauded.

They say that sort of Bartholomew-fair advocacy (in which people are invited to an entertainment by the medium of a hoarse yelling beef-eater, twenty-four drums, and a jack-pudding turning head over heels) is absolutely necessary to excite the public attention. What an error! I say

that the refined individual so accosted is more likely to close his ears, and, shuddering, run away from the booth. Poor Horace Waddlepoodle ! to think that thy gentle accumulation of bric-à-brac should have passed away in such a manner ! by means of a man who brings down a butterfly with a blunderbuss, and talks of a pin's head through a speaking trumpet ! Why, the auctioneer's very voice was enough to crack the Sèvres porcelain and blow the lace into annihilation. Let it be remembered that I speak of the gentleman in his public character merely, meaning to insinuate nothing more than I would by stating that Lord Brougham speaks with a northern accent, or that the voice of Mr. Shiel is sometimes unpleasantly shrill.

Now the character I have formed to myself of a great auctioneer is this. I fancy him a man of first-rate and irreproachable birth and fashion. I fancy his person so agreeable that it must be a pleasure for ladies to behold and tailors to dress it. As a private man he must move in the very best society, which will flock round his pulpit when he mounts it in his public calling. It will be a privilege for vulgar people to attend the hall where he lectures ; and they will consider it an honour to be allowed to pay their money for articles, the value of which is stamped by his high recommendation. Nor can such a person be a mere fribble, or any loose hanger-on of fashion imagine he may assume the character. The gentleman auctioneer must be an artist above all, adoring his profession ; and adoring it, what must he not know ? He must have a good knowledge of the history and language of all nations ; not the knowledge of the mere critical scholar, but of the lively and elegant man of the world. He will not commit the gross blunders of pronunciation that untravelled Englishmen perpetrate ; he will not degrade his subject by coarse eulogy, or sicken his audience with vulgar banter. He will know where to apply praise and wit properly ; he will have the tact only acquired in good society, and know where a joke is in place, and how far a compliment may go. He will not outrageously and indiscriminately laud all objects committed to his charge, for he knows the value of praise ; that diamonds, could we have them by the bushel, would be used as coals ; that, above all, he has a character of sincerity to support ; that he is not merely the advocate of the person who employs him, but that the

public is his client too, who honours him and confides in him. Ask him to sell a copy of Raffaele for an original ; a trumpery modern Brussels counterfeit for real old Mechlin ; some common French forged crockery for the old delightful, delicate Dresden china ; and he will quit you with scorn, or order his servant to show you the door of his study.

Study, by the way,—no, 'study' is a vulgar word ; every word is vulgar which a man uses to give the world an exaggerated notion of himself or his condition. When the wretched bagman, brought up to give evidence before Judge Coltman, was asked what his trade was, and replied that 'he represented the house of Dobson and Hobson,' he showed himself to be a vulgar, mean-souled wretch, and was most properly reprimanded by his lordship. To be a bagman is to be humble, but not of necessity vulgar. Pomposity is vulgar, to ape a higher rank than your own is vulgar, for an ensign of militia to call himself captain is vulgar, or for a bagman to style himself the 'representative' of Dobson and Hobson. The honest auctioneer, then, will not call his room his study ; but his 'private room,' or his office, or whatever may be the phrase commonly used among auctioneers.

He will not for the same reason call himself (as once in a momentary feeling of pride and enthusiasm for the profession I thought he should)—he will not call himself 'an advocate,' but an auctioneer. There is no need to attempt to awe people by big titles : let each man bear his own name without shame. And a very gentlemanlike and agreeable, though exceptional position (for it is clear that there cannot be more than two of the class), may the auctioneer occupy.

He must not sacrifice his honesty, then, either for his own sake or his client's in any way, nor tell fibs about himself or them. He is by no means called upon to draw the long bow in their behalf ; all that his office obliges him to do—and let us hope his disposition will lead him to do it also—is to take a favourable, kindly, philanthropic view of the world ; to say what can fairly be said by a good-natured and ingenious man in praise of any article for which he is desirous to awaken public sympathy. And how readily and pleasantly may this be done ! I will take upon myself, for instance, to write an eulogium upon So-and-so's last novel, which shall be every word of it true ; and which work, though to some discontented spirits it

might appear dull, may be shown to be really amusing and instructive,—nay, *is* amusing and instructive,—to those who have the art of discovering where those precious qualities lie.

An auctioneer should have the organ of truth large ; of imagination and comparison, considerable ; of wit, great ; of benevolence, excessively large.

And how happy might such a man be and cause others to be ! He should go through the world laughing, merry, observant, kind-hearted. He should love everything in the world, because his profession regards everything. With books of lighter literature (for I do not recommend the genteel auctioneer to meddle with heavy antiquarian and philological works) he should be elegantly conversant, being able to give a neat history of the author, a pretty sparkling kind criticism of the work, and an appropriate eulogium upon the binding, which would make those people read who never read before ; or buy, at least, which is his first consideration. Of pictures we have already spoken. Of china, of jewellery, of gold-headed canes, valuable arms, picturesque antiquities, with what eloquent *entrainement* might he not speak ! He feels every one of these things in his heart. He has all the tastes of all the fashionable world. Dr. Meyrick cannot be more enthusiastic about an old suit of armour than he ; Sir Harris Nicolas not more eloquent regarding the gallant times in which it was worn, and the brave histories connected with it. He takes up a pearl necklace with as much delight as any beauty who was sighing to wear it round her own snowy throat, and hugs a china monster with as much joy as the oldest duchess could do. Nor must he affect these things ; he must feel them. He is a glass in which all the tastes of fashion are reflected. He must be every one of the characters to whom he addresses himself—a genteel Goethe or Shakespeare, a fashionable world-spirit.

How can a man be all this and not be a gentleman ; and not have had an education in the midst of the best company—an insight into the most delicate feelings, and wants, and usages ? The pulpit oratory of such a man would be invaluable ; people would flock to listen to him from far and near. He might out of a single teacup cause streams of world-philosophy to flow, which would be drunk in by grateful thousands ; and draw out of an old pincushion

points of wit, morals, and experience, that would make a nation wise.

Look round, examine THE ANNALS OF AUCTIONS, as Mr. Robins remarks, and (with every respect for him and his brethren) say, is there in the profession SUCH A MAN ? Do we want such a man ? Is such a man likely or not likely to make an immense fortune ? Can we get such a man except out of the very best society, and among the most favoured there ?

Everybody answers 'No !' I knew you would answer no. And now, gentlemen who have laughed at my pretension to discover a profession, say, have I not ? I have laid my finger upon the spot where the social deficit exists. I have shown that we labour under a want ; and when the world wants, do we not know that a man will step forth to fill the vacant space that Fate has left for him ? Pass we now to the

SECOND PROFESSION

This profession, too, is a great, lofty, and exceptional one, and discovered by me considering these things, and deeply musing upon the necessities of society. Nor let honourable gentlemen imagine that I am enabled to offer them in this profession, more than any other, a promise of what is called future glory, deathless fame, and so forth. All that I say is, that I can put young men in the way of making a comfortable livelihood, and leaving behind them, not a name, but, what is better, a decent maintenance to their children. Fitz-Boodle is as good a name as any in England. General Fitz-Boodle, who, in Marlborough's time, and in conjunction with the famous Van Slaap, beat the French in the famous action of Vischzouchee, near Mardyck, in Holland, on the 14th of February, 1709, is promised an immortality upon his tomb in Westminster Abbey ; but he died of apoplexy, deucedly in debt, two years afterwards : and what after that is the use of a name ?

No, no ; the age of chivalry is passed. Take the twenty-four first men who come into the club, and ask who they are, and how they made their money ? There's Woolsey-Sackville ; his father was Lord Chancellor, and sat on the woolsack, whence he took his title : his grandfather dealt

in coal-sacks, and not in wool-sacks,—small coal-sacks, dribbling out little supplies of black diamonds to the poor. Yonder comes Frank Leveson, in a huge broad-brimmed hat, his shirt cuffs turned up to his elbows. Leveson is as gentlemanly a fellow as the world contains, and if he has a fault, is perhaps too finikin. Well, you fancy him related to the Sutherland family : nor, indeed, does honest Frank deny it ; but *entre nous*, my good sir, his father was an attorney, and his grandfather a bailiff in Chancery Lane, bearing a name still older than that of Leveson, namely, Levy. So it is that this confounded equality grows and grows, and has laid the good old nobility by the heels. Look at that venerable Sir Charles Kitley, of Kitley Park : he is interested about the Ashantees, and is just come from Exeter Hall. Kitley discounted bills in the City in the year 1787, and gained his baronetcy by a loan to the French princes. All these points of history are perfectly well known ; and do you fancy the world cares ? Psha ! Profession is no disgrace to a man : be what you like, provided you succeed. If Mr. Fauntleroy could come to life with a million of money, you and I would dine with him : you know we would ; for why should we be better than our neighbours ?

Put, then, out of your head the idea that this or that profession is unworthy of you : take any that may bring you profit, and thank him that puts you in the way of being rich.

The profession I would urge (upon a person duly qualified to undertake it) has, I confess, at the first glance, something ridiculous about it ; and will not appear to young ladies so romantic as the calling of a gallant soldier blazing with glory, gold lace, and vermilion coats ; or a dear delightful clergyman, with a sweet blue eye, and a pocket-handkerchief scented charmingly with lavender-water. The profession I allude to *will*, I own, be to young women disagreeable, to sober men trivial, to great stupid moralists unworthy.

But mark my words for it, that in the religious world (I have once or twice, by mistake no doubt, had the honour of dining in 'serious' houses, and can vouch for the fact, that the dinners there are of excellent quality), in the serious world, in the great mercantile world, among the legal community (notorious feeders), in every house in town

(except some half-dozen which can afford to do without such aid), the man I propose might speedily render himself indispensable.

Does the reader now begin to take ? Have I hinted enough for him that he may see with eagle glance the immense beauty of the profession I am about to unfold to him ? We have all seen Gunter and Chevet ; Fregoso, on the Puerta del Sol (a relation of the ex-minister Calomarde), is a good purveyor enough for the benighted ollaeaters of Madrid ; nor have I any fault to find with Guimard, a Frenchman, who has lately set up in the Toledo, at Naples, where he furnishes people with decent food. It has given me pleasure, too, in walking about London—in the Strand, in Oxford Street, and elsewhere, to see four-nisseurs and comestible merchants newly set up. Messrs. Morell have excellent articles in their warehouses ; Fortnum and Mason are known to most of my readers.

But what is not known, what is wanted, what is languished for in England is a *dinner-master*,—a gentleman who is not a provider of meat or wine, like the parties before named. who can have no earthly interest in the price of truffled turkeys or dry champagne beyond that legitimate interest which he may feel for his client, and which leads him to see that the latter is not cheated by his tradesman. For the dinner-giver is almost naturally an ignorant man. How in mercy's name can Mr. Serjeant Snorter, who is all day at Westminster, or in chambers, know possibly the mysteries, the delicacy, of dinner-giving ? How can Alderman Pogson know anything beyond the fact that venison is good with currant-jelly, and that he likes lots of green fat with his turtle ? Snorter knows law, Pogson is acquainted with the state of the tallow-market ; but what should he know of eating, like you and me, who have given up our time to it ? (I say *me* only familiarly, for I have only reached so far in the science as to know that I know nothing.) But men there are, gifted individuals, who have spent years of deep thought—not merely intervals of labour, but hours of study every day—over the gormandizing science,¹—who, like alchemists, have let their fortunes go,

¹ The publisher has referred me to an essay in this Magazine upon the subject of eating in Paris, by a person of the name of Tidmarsh, who may be a very worthy man for aught I know to the contrary ; but has, with permission be it spoken, shown the

guinea by guinea, into the all-devouring pot,—who, ruined as they sometimes are, never get a guinea by chance but they will have a plate of peas in May with it, or a little feast of ortolans, or a piece of Glo'ster salmon, or one more flask from their favourite claret-bin.

It is not the ruined gastronomist that I would advise a person to select as his *table-master*; for the opportunities of speculation would be too great in a position of such confidence—such complete abandonment of one man to another. A ruined man would be making bargains with the tradesmen. They would offer to cash bills for him, or send him opportune presents of wine, which he could convert into money, or bribe him in one way or another. Let this be done, and the profession of table-master is ruined. Snorter and Pogson may almost as well order their own dinners, as be at the mercy of a 'gastronomic agent' whose faith is not beyond all question.

A vulgar mind, in reply to these remarks regarding the gastronomical ignorance of Snorter and Pogson, might say, 'True, these gentlemen know nothing of household economy, being occupied with other more important business elsewhere. But what are their wives about? Lady Pogson in Harley Street has nothing earthly to do but to mind her poodle, and her mantua-maker's and house-keeper's bills. Mrs. Snorter in Bedford Place, when she has taken her drive in the Park with the young ladies, may surely have time to attend to her husband's guests and preside over the preparations of his kitchen, as she does worthily at his hospitable mahogany.' To this I answer, that a man who expects a woman to understand the philosophy of dinner-giving, shows the strongest evidence of a low mind. He is unjust towards that lovely and delicate creature, woman, to suppose that she heartily understands and cares for what she eats and drinks. No; taken as a rule, women have no real appetites. They are children in the gormandizing way; loving sugar, sops, tarts, trifles, apricot-creams, and such gewgaws. They would take a sip of malmsey, and would drink currant-wine just as happily, if that accursed liquor were presented to them by the butler. Did you ever know a woman who could lay her fair hand upon her gentle heart and most lamentable vulgarity and ignorance in his writing. As for Nimrod's 'Cibaria,' the barbarity of them is quite amazing.—G. F.-B.

say on her conscience that she preferred dry sillery to sparkling champagne? Such a phenomenon does not exist. They are not made for eating and drinking; or, if they make a pretence to it, become downright odious. Nor can they, I am sure, witness the preparations of a really great repast without a certain jealousy. They grudge spending money (ask guards, coachmen, inn-waiters, whether this be not the case). They will give their all, Heaven bless them! to serve a son, a grandson, or a dear relative, but they have not the heart to pay for small things magnificently. They are jealous of good dinners, and no wonder. I have shown in a former discourse how they are jealous of smoking, and other personal enjoyments of the male. I say, then, that Lady Pogson or Mrs. Snorter can never conduct their husbands' table properly. Fancy either of them consenting to allow a calf to be stewed down into gravy for one dish, or a dozen hares to be sacrificed to a single *purée* of game, or the best madeira to be used for a sauce, or half a dozen of champagne to boil a ham in. They will be for bringing a bottle of marsala in place of the old particular, or for having the ham cooked in water. But of these matters—of kitchen philosophy—I have no practical or theoretic knowledge; and must beg pardon if, only understanding the goodness of a dish when cooked, I may have unconsciously made some blunder regarding the preparation.

Let it, then, be set down as an axiom, without further trouble of demonstration, that a woman is a bad dinner-caterer; either too great and simple for it, or too mean—I don't know which it is; and gentlemen accordingly as they admire or condemn the sex, may settle that matter their own way. In brief, the mental constitution of lovely woman is such that she cannot give a great dinner. It must be done by a man. It can't be done by an ordinary man, because he does not understand it. Vain fool! and he sends off to the pastrycook in Great Russell Street or Baker Street, he lays on a couple of extra waiters (green-grocers in the neighbourhood), he makes a great pother with his butler in the cellar, and fancies he has done the business.

Bon Dieu! Who has not been at those dinners?—those monstrous exhibitions of the pastrycook's art? Who does not know those made dishes with the universal

sauce to each, fricandeaux, sweetbreads, damp dumpy cutlets, &c., seasoned with the compound of grease, onions, bad port wine, cayenne-pepper, curry-powder (Warren's blacking, for what I know, but the taste is always the same)—there they lie in the old corner-dishes, the poor wiry moselle and sparkling burgundy in the ice-coolers, and the old story of white and brown soup, turbot, little smelts, boiled turkey, saddle of mutton, and so forth? 'Try a little of that fricandeau,' says Mrs. Snorter, with a kind smile; 'you'll find it, I think, very nice;' be sure it has come in a green tray from Great Russell Street. 'Mr. Fitz-Boodle, you have been in Germany,' cries Snorter, knowingly; 'taste the hock, and tell me what you think of *that*.'

How should he know better, poor benighted creature; or she, dear good soul that she is? If they would have a leg of mutton, and an apple pudding, and a glass of sherry and port (or simple brandy-and-water called by its own name) after dinner, all would be very well; but they must shine, they must dine as their neighbours. There is no difference in the style of dinners in London; people with five hundred a year treat you exactly as those of five thousand. They *will* have their moselle or hock, their fatal side-dishes brought in the green trays from the pastrycooks.

Well, there is no harm done; not as regards the dinner-givers at least, though the dinner-eaters may have to suffer somewhat; it only shows that the former are hospitably inclined, and wish to do the very best in their power,—good honest fellows! If they do wrong, how can they help it? they know no better.

And now, is it not as clear as the sun at noon-day, that a WANT exists in London for a superintendent of the table—a gastronomic agent—a dinner-master, as I have called him before? A man of such a profession would be a metropolitan benefit; hundreds of thousands of people of the respectable sort, people in white waistcoats, would thank him daily. Calculate how many dinners are given in the City of London, and calculate the numbers of benedictions that 'the Agency' might win.

And as no doubt the observant man of the world has remarked that the freeborn Englishman of the respectable class is, of all others, the most slavish and truckling to

a lord ; that there is no fly-blown peer but he is pleased to have him at his table, proud beyond measure to call him by his surname (without the lordly prefix) ; and that those lords whom he does not know, he yet (the freeborn Englishman) takes care to have their pedigrees and ages by heart from his world-bible, the *Peerage* : as this is an indisputable fact, and as it is in this particular class of Britons that our agent must look to find clients, I need not say it is necessary that the agent should be as high-born as possible, and that he should be able to tack, if possible, an honourable or some other handle to his respectable name. He must have it on his professional card—

The Honourable George Gormand Gobbleton.

Apician Chambers, Pall Mall.

Or,

Sir Augustus Garber Cramley Cramley.

Amphitryonic Council Office, Swallow Street.

Or in some such neat way, Gothic letters on a large handsome crockery-ware card, with possibly a gilt coat of arms and supporters, or the blood-red hand of baronetcy duly displayed ; depend on it plenty of guineas will fall in it, and that Gobbleton's supporters will support him comfortably enough.

For this profession is not like that of the auctioneer, which I take to be a far more noble one, because more varied and more truthful ; but in the Agency case, a little humbug at least is necessary. A man cannot be a successful agent by the mere force of his simple merit or genius in eating and drinking. He must of necessity impose upon the vulgar to a certain degree. He must be of that rank

which will lead them naturally to respect him, otherwise they might be led to jeer at his profession ; but let a noble exercise it, and bless your soul, all the court-guide is dumb !

He will then give out in a manly and somewhat pompous address what has before been mentioned, namely, that he has seen the fatal way in which the hospitality of England has been perverted hitherto, *accaparé'd* by a few cooks with green trays. (He must use a good deal of French in his language, for that is considered very gentlemanlike by vulgar people.) He will take a set of chambers in Carlton Gardens, which will be richly though severely furnished, and the door of which will be opened by a French valet (he *must* be a Frenchman, remember), who will say, on letting Mr. Snorter or Sir Benjamin Pogson in, that '*Milor* is at home.' Pogson will then be shown into a library furnished with massive book-cases, containing all the works on cookery and wines (the titles of them) in all the known languages in the world. Any books, of course, will do, as you will have them handsomely bound, and keep them under plate glass. On a side-table will be little sample-bottles of wines, a few truffles on a white porcelain saucer, a prodigious strawberry or two, perhaps, at the time when such fruit cost much money. On the library will be busts marked Ude, Carème, Béchamel, in marble (never mind what heads of course) ; and, perhaps, on the clock should be a figure of the Prince of Condé's cook killing himself because the fish had not arrived in time ; there may be a wreath of *immortelles* on the figure to give it a more decidedly Frenchified air. The walls will be of a dark rich paper, hung round with neat gilt frames, containing plans of *menus* of various great dinners, those of Cambacérès, Napoleon, Louis XIV, Louis XVIII, Heliogabalus if you like, each signed by the respective cook.

After the stranger has looked about him at these things, which he does not understand in the least, especially the truffles, which look like dirty potatoes, you will make your appearance, dressed in a dark dress, with one handsome enormous gold chain, and one large diamond ring ; a gold snuff-box, of course, which you will thrust into the visitor's paw before saying a word. You will be yourself a portly grave man, with your hair a little bald and grey. In fact, in this as in all other professions, you had best try to look as like Canning as you can.

When Pogson has done sneezing with the snuff, you will say to him, 'Take a *fauteuil* ; I have the honour of addressing Mr. Pogson, I believe ?' And then you will explain to him your system.

This, of course, must vary with every person you address. But let us lay down a few of the heads of a plan which may be useful, or may be modified infinitely, or may be cast aside altogether, just as circumstances dictate. After all *I* am not going to turn gastronomic agent, and speak only for the benefit perhaps of the very person who is reading this.

SYNOPSIS OF THE GASTRONOMIC AGENCY OF THE
HONOURABLE GEORGE GOBBLETON

The Gastronomic Agent having traversed Europe, and dined with the best society of the world, has been led naturally, as a patriot, to turn his thought homeward, and cannot but deplore the lamentable ignorance regarding gastronomy displayed in a country for which Nature has done almost everything.

But it is ever singularly thus. Inherent ignorance belongs to man ; and The Agent, in his Continental travels, has always remarked, that the countries most fertile in themselves were invariably worse tilled than those more barren. The Italians and the Spaniards leave their fields to Nature, as we leave our vegetables, fish, and meat. And, Heavens ! what richness do we fling away,—what dormant qualities in our dishes do we disregard,—what glorious gastronomic crops (if The Agent may be permitted the expression), what glorious gastronomic crops do we sacrifice, allowing our goodly meats and fishes to lie fallow ! 'Chance,' it is said by an ingenious historian, who, having been long a secretary in the East India House, must certainly have had access to the best information upon Eastern matters ; 'Chance,' it is said by Mr. Charles Lamb, 'which burnt down a Chinaman's house, with a litter of sucking pigs that were unable to escape from the interior, discovered to the world the excellence of roast pig.' Gunpowder, we know, was invented by a similar fortuity. [The reader will observe that my style in the supposed character of a Gastronomic Agent is purposely pompous

and loud.] So, 'tis said, was printing,—so glass. We should have drunk our wine poisoned with the villanous odour of the borachio, had not some Eastern merchants, lighting their fires in the desert, marked the strange composition which now glitters on our sideboards, and holds the costly produce of our vines.

We have spoken of the natural riches of a country. Let the reader think but for one moment of the gastronomic wealth of our country of England, and he will be lost in thankful amazement as he watches the astonishing riches poured out upon us from Nature's bounteous cornucopia ! Look at our fisheries !—the trout and salmon tossing in our brawling streams ; the white and full breasted turbot struggling in the mariner's net ; the purple lobster lured by hopes of greed into his basket-prison, which he quits only for the red ordeal of the pot. Look at whitebait, great Heavens !—look at whitebait, and a thousand frisking, glittering, silvery things beside, which the nymphs of our native streams bear kindly to the deities of our kitchens—our kitchens such as they are.

And though it may be said, that other countries produce the freckle-backed salmon and the dark broad-shouldered turbot ; though trout frequent many a stream besides those of England, and lobsters sprawl on other sands but ours ; yet, let it be remembered, that our native country possesses those altogether, while other lands only know them separately ; that, above all, whitebait is peculiarly our country's,—our city's own ! Blessings and eternal praises be on it, and, of course, on brown bread-and-butter ! And the Briton should further remember, with honest pride and thankfulness, the situation of his capital, of London : the lordly turtle floats from the sea into the stream, and from the stream to the city ; the rapid fleets of all the world *se donnent rendezvous* in the docks of our silvery Thames ; the produce of our coasts and provincial cities, east and west, is borne to us on the swift lines of lightning railroads. In a word—and no man but one who, like The Agent, has travelled Europe over, can appreciate the gift—there is no city on earth's surface so well supplied with fish as London !

With respect to our meats, all praise is supererogatory. Ask the wretched hunter of *chevreuil*, the poor devourer of *Rehbraten*, what they think of the noble English haunch,

that, after bounding in the Park of Knole or Windsor, exposes its magnificent flank upon some broad silver platter at our tables ? It is enough to say of foreign venison, that *they are obliged to lard it*. Away ! ours is the palm of roast ; whether of the crisp mutton that crops the thymy herbage of our downs, or the noble ox who revels on lush Althorpean oilcakes. What game is like to ours ? Mans excels us in poultry, 'tis true ; but 'tis only in merry England that the partridge has a flavour, that the turkey can almost *se passer de truffes*, that the jolly juicy goose can be eaten as he deserves.

Our vegetables, moreover, surpass all comment ; Art (by the means of glass) has wrung fruit out of the bosom of Nature, such as she grants to no other clime. And if we have no vineyards on our hills, we have gold to purchase their best produce. Nature, and enterprise that masters Nature, have done everything for our land.

But, with all these prodigious riches in our power, is it not painful to reflect how absurdly we employ them ? Can we say that we are in the habit of dining well ? Alas, no ! and The Agent, roaming o'er foreign lands, and seeing how, with small means and great ingenuity and perseverance, great ends were effected, comes back sadly to his own country, whose wealth he sees absurdly wasted, whose energies are misdirected, and whose vast capabilities are allowed to lie idle. . . . [Here should follow what I have only hinted at previously, a vivid and terrible picture of the degradation of our table.] . . . Oh, for a master spirit, to give an impetus to the land, to see its great power directed in the right way, and its wealth not squandered or hidden, but nobly put out to interest and spent !

The Agent dares not hope to win that proud station—to be the destroyer of a barbarous system wallowing in abusive prodigality—to become a dietetic reformer—the Luther of the table.

But convinced of the wrongs which exist, he will do his humble endeavour to set them right, and to those who know that they are ignorant (and this is a vast step to knowledge) he offers his counsels, his active co-operation, his frank and kindly sympathy. The Agent's qualifications are these :—

1. He is of one of the best families in England ; and has in himself, or through his ancestors, been accustomed to

good living for centuries. In the reign of Henry V, his maternal great-great-grandfather, Roger de Gobylton [*the name may be varied, of course, or the king's reign, or the dish invented*], was the first who discovered the method of roasting a peacock whole, with his tail-feathers displayed ; and the dish was served to the two kings at Rouen. Sir Walter Cramley, in Elizabeth's reign, produced before her majesty, when at Killingworth Castle, mackerel with the famous *gooseberry sauce*, &c.

2. He has, through life, devoted himself to no other study than that of the table : and has visited to that end the courts of all the monarchs of Europe : taking the receipts of the cooks, with whom he lives on terms of intimate friendship, often at enormous expense to himself.

3. He has the same acquaintance with all the vintages of the Continent ; having passed the autumn of 1811 (the comet year) on the great Weinberg of Johannisberg ; being employed similarly at Bordeaux, in 1834 ; at Oporto, in 1820 ; and at Xeres de la Frontera, with his excellent friends, Duff, Gordon, & Co., the year after. He travelled to India and back in company with fourteen pipes of madeira (on board of the *Samuel Snob*, East Indiaman, Captain Scuttler), and spent the vintage season in the island, with unlimited powers of observation granted to him by the great houses there.

4. He has attended Mr. Groves of Charing Cross, and Mr. Giblett of Bond Street, in a course of purchases of fish and meat ; and is able at a glance to recognize the age of mutton, the primeness of beef, the firmness and freshness of fish of all kinds.

5. He has visited the parks, the grouse-manors, and the principal gardens of England, in a similar professional point of view.

The Agent then, through his subordinates, engages to provide gentlemen who are about to give dinner-parties—

1. With cooks to dress the dinners ; a list of which gentlemen he has by him, and will recommend none who are not worthy of the strictest confidence.

2. With a menu for the table, according to the price which the *Amphitryon* chooses to incur.

3. He will, through correspondences with the various *fournisseurs* of the metropolis, provide them with viands,

fruit, wine, &c., sending to Paris, if need be, where he has a regular correspondence with Messrs. Chevet.

4. He has a list of dexterous table-waiters (all answering to the name of John for fear of mistakes, the butler's name to be settled according to pleasure), and would strongly recommend that the servants of the house should be locked in the back-kitchen or servants' hall during the time the dinner takes place.

5. He will receive and examine all the accounts of the fournisseurs,—of course pledging his honour as a gentleman not to receive one shilling of paltry gratification from the tradesmen he employs, but to see that the bills are more moderate, and their goods of better quality, than they would provide to any person of less experience than himself.

6. His fee for superintending a dinner will be five guineas ; and The Agent entreats his clients to trust *entirely* to him and his subordinates for the arrangement of the repast,—*not to think* of inserting dishes of their own invention, or producing wine from their own cellars, as he engages to have it brought in the best order, and fit for immediate drinking. Should the Amphitryon, however, desire some particular dish or wine, he must consult The Agent, in the first case by writing, in the second, by sending a sample to The Agent's chambers. For it is manifest that the whole complexion of a dinner may be altered by the insertion of a single dish ; and, therefore, parties will do well to mention their wishes on the first interview with The Agent. He cannot be called upon to recompose his bill of fare, except at great risk to the *ensemble* of the dinner and enormous inconvenience to himself.

7. The Agent will be at home for consultation from ten o'clock until two,—earlier, if gentlemen who are engaged at early hours in the City desire to have an interview ; and be it remembered that a *personal interview* is always the best : for it is greatly necessary to know not only the number but the character of the guests whom the Amphitryon proposes to entertain,—whether they are fond of any particular wine or dish, what is their state of health, rank, style, profession, &c.

8. At two o'clock, he will commence his rounds ; for as the metropolis is wide, it is clear that he must be early in the field in some districts. From 2 to 3, he will be in Russell Square and the neighbourhood ; 3 to 3½, Harley Street,

Portland Place, Cavendish Square, and the environs ; $3\frac{3}{4}$ to $4\frac{1}{4}$, Portman Square, Gloucester Place, Baker Street, &c. ; $4\frac{1}{4}$ to 5, the new district about Hyde Park Terrace ; 5 to $5\frac{3}{4}$ St. John's Wood and the Regent's Park. He will be in Grosvenor Square by 6, and in Belgrave Square, Pimlico, and its vicinity, by 7. Parties there are requested not to dine until 8 o'clock ; and The Agent, once for all, peremptorily announces that he will not go to the Palace, where it is utterly impossible to serve a good dinner.

TO TRADESMEN.

Every Monday evening during the season the Gastronomic Agent proposes to give a series of trial-dinners, to which the principal gourmands of the metropolis, and a few of The Agent's most respectable clients, will be invited. Covers will be laid for *ten* at nine o'clock precisely. And as The Agent does not propose to exact a single shilling of profit from their bills, and as his recommendation will be of infinite value to them, the tradesmen he employs will furnish the weekly dinner gratis. Cooks will attend (who have acknowledged characters) upon the same terms. To save trouble, a book will be kept where butchers, poulterers, fishmongers, &c., may inscribe their names in order, taking it by turns to supply the trial-table. Wine merchants will naturally compete every week promiscuously, sending what they consider their best samples, and leaving with the hall-porter tickets of the prices. Confectionery to be done out of the house. Fruiterers, market-men, as butchers and poulterers. The Agent's *maitre d'hôtel* will give a receipt to each individual for the articles he produces ; and let all remember that The Agent is a *very keen judge*, and woe betide those who serve him or his clients ill !

GEORGE GORMAND GOBBLETON.

CARLTON GARDENS, June 10, 1842.

Here I have sketched out the heads of such an address as I conceive a gastronomic agent might put forth ; and appeal pretty confidently to the British public regarding its merits and my own discovery. If this be not a profession—a new one—a feasible one—a lucrative one,—I don't know what is. Say that a man attends but fifteen dinners daily, that is seventy-five guineas, or five hundred and fifty pounds weekly, or fourteen thousand three hundred pounds for a season of six months : and how many of our younger sons have such a capital even ? Let, then, some unemployed gentleman with the requisite qualifications come forward.

It will not be necessary that he should have done all that is stated in the prospectus ; but, at any rate, let him *say* he has : there can't be much harm in an innocent fib of that sort ; for the gastronomic agent must be a sort of dinner-pope, whose opinions cannot be supposed to err.

And as he really will be an excellent judge of eating and drinking, and will bring his whole mind to bear upon the question, and will speedily acquire an experience which no person out of the profession can possibly have ; and as, moreover, he will be an honourable man, not practising upon his client in any way, or demanding sixpence beyond his just fee, the world will gain vastly by the coming forward of such a person,—gain in good dinners, and absolutely save money ; for what is five guineas for a dinner of sixteen ! The sum may be *gaspillé* by a cook-wench, or by one of those abominable before-named pastrycooks, with their green trays.

If any man take up the business, he will invite me, of course, to the Monday dinners. Or does ingratitude go so far as that a man should forget the author of his good fortune ? I believe it does. Turn we away from the sickening theme, and let us say a few words regarding my

THIRD PROFESSION.

The last profession is one in all respects inferior to the two preceding—is merely temporary, whereas they are for life ; but has this advantage, that it may be exercised by the vulgarest man in Europe, and requires not the least previous experience or education.

It is better, unluckily, for a foreigner than an Englishman ; but the latter may easily adopt it, if he have any American relations, or if he choose to call himself a citizen of the great republic. In fact, this profession simply consists in being a *foreigner*.

You may be ever so illiterate and low-bred, and you are all the better for the profession. Your worst social qualities will stand you in stead. You should, to practise properly, be curious, talkative, abominably impudent and forward. You should never be rebuffed because people turn their backs on you, but should attack them again and again ; and, depend upon it, that if you are determined to know a man,

he will end, out of mere weariness, by admitting you to his acquaintance.

Say that you met a person once at a café, or tavern, and that you do not know one single Englishman in the world (except the tradesmen in the nameless quarter where you were born) but this, some young fellow from college probably, who is spending his vacation abroad. Well, you know *this* man, and it is enough. Ask him at once for letters of introduction; say that you are a young American (for I presume the reader is an Englishman, and this character he can therefore assume more readily than any other) wishing to travel, and ask him for letters to his family in England. He hums and ha's, and says he will send them. Nonsense! call the waiter to bring pens, ink, and paper; lay them laughingly before your friend; say that now is the best time, and almost certainly you will have the letters. He can't abuse you in the notes, because you are looking over his shoulder. The two or three first men upon whom you make the attempt may say that you may go to the deuce, and threaten to kick you out of the room:—but 'tis against the chances, this sort of ferocity. Men are rather soft than spirited; and if they *be* spirited, you have only to wait until you find a soft one.

It will be as well, perhaps, while making the demand upon your friend in the café, to produce a series of letters directed to the Marquess of L——e, the Duke of D——, Mr. R——, the poet, Mr. C. K——, the eminent actor now retired, and other distinguished literary or fashionable persons, saying that your friends in America have already supplied you with these, but that you want chiefly introductions to *private families*, to see '*the homes of England*'; and as Englishmen respect lords (see the remarks in Profession II), most likely your young café acquaintance will be dazzled by the sight of these addresses, and will give you letters the more willingly, saying to himself, 'Who knows, egad, but that this American may get my sisters to L—— House?' One way or the other, you will be sure to end by having a letter—a real letter; and as for those you have written, why, upon my honour, I do not think that you can do better than present some of them on the chance: for the Duke and the Marquess receive so many people at their houses, that they cannot be expected to remember all their names. Write, then, bravely at once—

To his Grace the Duke of Dorsetshire, K.G., London.

TWENTY-ONE STREET, BOSTON,
May, 1842.

MY DEAR DUKE,—In the friendly hospitality which you exercised towards me on my last visit to London, I am fain to hope that you looked somewhat to my character as an individual, as well as to my quality as a citizen of the greatest country in the world: I, for my part, have always retained the warmest regard for you, and shall be happy to see you any time you come our way.

Assuming, I am sure justifiably, that your repeated assurances of regard were sincere (for I do not consider you as false, as I found the rest of the English nobility), I send, to be under your special protection whilst in London, my dear young friend, Nahum Hodge, distinguished among us as a patriot and a poet; in the first of which capacities he burned several farm-houses in Canada last fall, and, in the latter, has produced his celebrated work *The Bellowings of the Buffalo*, printed at Buffalo, New York, by Messrs. Bowie and Cutler, and which are far superior to any poems ever produced in the old country. Relying upon our acquaintance, I have put down your name, my dear Duke, as a subscriber for six copies, and will beg you to hand over to my young friend Nahum twelve dollars—the price.

He is a modest, retiring young man, as most of our young republicans are, and will want to be urged and pushed forward into good society. This, my dear fellow, I am sure you will do for me. Ask him as often as you can to dinner, and present him at the best houses you can in London. I have written to the Marquess of Sandown, reminding him of our acquaintance, and saying that you will vouch for the respectability of young Nahum, who will take the liberty of leaving his card at Sandown House. I do not wish that he should be presented at your court; for I conceive that a republican ought not to sanctify by his presence any exhibition so degrading as that of the English levee.

Nahum Hodge will call on you at breakfast-time; I have told him that is the best hour to find yourself and the dear Duchess at home. Give my love to her and the children, and believe me, my dear friend,

Your Lordship's most faithful Servant,
EBENEZER BROWN.

Such a letter as this will pretty surely get you admission to his Grace; and of course you will be left to your own resources to make yourself comfortable in the house. Do not be rebuffed if the porter says, 'Not at home'; say, 'You liveried varlet and slave! do you pretend to lie in the face of a free-born American republican? Take in that note, do you hear, or I'll wap you like one of my

niggers !' Those fat, overfed men, who loll in porters' chairs, are generally timid, and your card will be sure to be received.

While a servant has gone upstairs with it, walk into the library at once,¹ look at all the papers, the seals, the books on the table, the addresses of all the letters, examine the pictures, and shout out, 'Here, you fat porter, come and tell me who these tarnation people are !' The man will respectfully come to you ; and whatever be your fate with the family upstairs—whether the Duke says he cannot see you, or that he knows nothing of you, at least you will have had an insight into his house and pictures, and may note down everything you see.

It is not probable he will say he knows nothing of you. He is too polite and kind-hearted for that,—nay, possibly, may recall to his mind that he once *did* receive an American by the name of Brown. If he only says he cannot see you, of course you will call again till he does ; and be sure that the porter will never dare to shut the door on you.

You will call and call so often, that he will end by inviting you to a party. Meanwhile, you will have had your evenings pretty well filled by invitations from the sisters of your friend whom you met in the café at Paris,—agreeable girls—say their name is Smith, and they live in Montague Place, or near Blackheath. Be sure you tell them all that you know the Duke of Dorsetshire, that you have been with his Grace that morning, and so on ; and not only good old Mr. Smith, but all his circle, will take care to invite you to as many dinners as you can possibly devour.

Your conduct at these repasts will be perfectly simple. Keep your eyes open, and do pretty much as you see other people do ; but never acknowledge you are in fault if any one presumes to blame you. Eat peas with your knife ; and if gently taken to task about this habit by Smith (a worthy man, who takes an interest in his 'son's friend'), say, 'Well, General Jackson eats peas with *his* knife : and I ain't proud. I guess General Jackson can wap any Englishman.' Say this sort of thing simply and unaffectedly, and you will be sure not to be pestered as to your mode of conveying your food to your mouth.

Take care at dinner not to admire anything ; on the contrary, if they bring you madeira, saying, 'La bless you,

¹ Of course you will select a house that is not *entre cour et jardin*.

taste *our* madeira! My father's got some that he gave fifty dollars a bottle for; this here ain't fit to bile for puddns.' If there are ducks, ask everybody if they have tasted canvas-backed ducks; oysters, say the New York oyster will feed six men; turtle, prefer terrapin, and so on.

And don't fancy that because you are insolent and disagreeable, people will be shy of you in this country. Sir, they like to be bullied in England, as to be bullies when abroad. They like a man to sneer at their dinners; it argues that you are in the habit of getting better. I have known the lowest-bred men imaginable pass for fine fellows by following this simple rule. Remember through life that a man will always rather submit to insolence than resist it.

Let this be your guide, then, in your commerce with all ranks. You will dine, of course, with your friends about Russell Square and Greenwich, until such time as you get a fair entry into the houses of greater people (by the way, you will find these much more shy of dinners and more profuse with their tea-parties than your humbler entertainers). But if you don't dine with them, you must keep up your credit in the other quarter of the town—*make believe* to dine with them. You can get a dinner for eightpence on those days, and figure in the evening party afterwards.

At the great parties, make up to that part of the room where the distinguished people are—not the great men of the land, but the wits, mark you—and begin talking with them at once; they will all respect you in their hearts, as they respect themselves, for being at such a grand house as that of his Grace the Duke of Dorsetshire.

The wits will, after a little, take you to the Wits' Club, the Muffinaeum, where you will enter gratis as a distinguished foreigner. You can breakfast there for a shilling, have the run of the letter-paper, and will, of course, take care to date your letters from thence.

Mind, then, once put your foot into a great house, and your fortune in society is easily made. You have but to attack, people will rather yield than resist. I once knew a Kentucky man, who, hearing the Marquess of Carum Gorum talking of the likelihood of grouse that year, interposed, 'My lord, it must be a wonderful sight for a stranger to see a grand meeting of the aristocrats

of England in the heathery hills of Scotia. What would I not give to behold such an exhibition?' The marquess smiled, shrugged, and said, 'Well, sir, if you come north, you must give me a day;' and then turned on his heel. This was in March: on the fourteenth of August Kentuck appeared with a new shooting jacket and a double-barrelled gun, got on credit, and stayed a fortnight at Mull House.

At last, he sent in a letter, before breakfast on Sabbath morning, to Lord Carum Gorum, saying, that he knew he was trespassing beyond all measure upon his lordship's patience, but that he was a stranger in the land, his remittances from America had somehow been delayed, and the fact was, that there he was, waterlogged till they came.

Lord Carum Gorum enclosed him a ten-pound note in an envelope with a notification that a gig would be ready for him after service: and Kentuck passed a very agreeable fortnight in Edinburgh, and published in the *Buffalo's Hump* a brilliant account of his stay at the noble lord's castle.

Then, again, if you see a famous beauty, praise every one of her points outrageously in your letter to the *Buffalo's Hump*, as—

ON THE LADY EMILY X—

*Who left dancing and came and talked to the poet at the déjeuner
at C—— Lodge.*

Beneath the gold acacia buds
My gentle Nora sits and broods,
Far, far away in Boston woods,
My gentle Nora!

I see the tear-drop in her e'e,
Her bosom's heaving tenderly;
I know—I know she thinks of me,
My darling Nora!

And where am I? My love, whilst thou
Sitt'st sad beneath the acacia bough,
Where pearl's on neck, and wreath on brow,
I stand, my Nora!

'Mid carcanet and coronet,
Where joy-lamps shine and flowers are set—
Where England's chivalry are met,
Behold me, Nora!

In this strange scene of revelry,
Amidst this gorgeous chivalry,
A form I saw, was like to thee,
My love—my Nora !

She paused amidst her converse glad ;
The lady saw that I was sad,
She pitied the poor lonely lad,—
Dost love her, Nora ?

In sooth, she is a lovely dame,
A lip of red, an eye of flame,
And clustering golden locks, the same
As thine, dear Nora !

Her glance is softer than the dawn's,
Her foot is lighter than the fawn's,
Her breast is whiter than the swan's,
Or thine, my Nora !

Oh, gentle breast to pity me !
Oh, lovely Ladye Emily !
Till death—till death I'll think of thee—
Of thee and Nora !

This sort of thing addressed to a thin, shrivelled person of five-and-forty (and I declare it is as easy to write such verses as to smoke a cigar) will be sure to have its effect ; and in this way you may live a couple of years in England very fashionably and well. By impudence you may go from one great house to another—by impudence you may get credit with all the fashionable tradesmen in London—by impudence you may find a publisher for your tour ; and if with all this impudence you cannot manage to pick up a few guineas by the way, you are not the man I take you for.

And this is my last *profession* ; in concluding the sketch of which, it is of course not necessary for me to say that the little character I have drawn out is not taken from any particular individual. No, on my honour, far from it ; it is rather an agreeable compound of many individuals whom it has been our fortune to see here ; and as for the story about the Marquess of Carum Gorum, it is, like the noble marquess himself, a fiction. It is a possibility, that is all—an embodiment of a good and feasible way of raising money. Perhaps gentlemen in America, where our periodicals are printed regularly, as I am given to

understand, may find the speculation worth their while ; and accordingly it is recommended to the republican press.

To the discriminating press of this country how shall I express my obligations for the unanimous applause which hailed my first appearance ? It is the more wonderful, as I pledge my sacred word, I never wrote a document before, much longer than a laundress's bill, or the acceptance of an invitation to dinner. But enough of this egotism ; thanks for praise conferred sound like vanity ; gratitude is hard to speak of, and at present it swells the full heart of

GEORGE SAVAGE FITZ-BOODLE.

PS.—My memoirs, and other interesting works, will appear next month, the length necessary to a discussion of the promised ' Professions ' having precluded the possibility of their insertion in the present number. They are of thrilling interest.

MISS LÖWE

[*Fraser's Magazine*, October, 1842.]

It has twice been my lot to leave Minna Löwe under the vine-leaves; on one occasion to break off into a dissertation about marriage, which, to my surprise, nobody has pronounced to be immoral; and secondly, Minna was obliged to give place to that great essay on professions which appeared in July, and which enables me, as the *Kelso Warder* observes, 'to take my place among the proudest and wisest of England's literary men.' This praise is, to be sure, rather qualified; and I beg leave to say once more that I am *not* a literary character in the least, but simply a younger brother of a good house wanting money.

Well, twice has Minna Löwe been left. I was very nearly being off from her in the above sentence, but luckily paused in time; for if anything were to occur in this paragraph, calling me away from her yet a third time, I should think it a solemn warning to discontinue her history, which is, I confess, neither very romantic in its details, nor very creditable to myself.

Let us take her where we left her in the June Number of this Magazine, gazing through a sunny cluster of vine-leaves, upon a young and handsome stranger, of noble face and exquisite proportions, who was trying to find the door of her father's bank. That entrance being through her amiable directions discovered, I entered and found Messrs. Moses and Solomon Löwe in the counting-house, Herr Solomon being the son of Moses, and head-clerk or partner in the business. That I was cheated in my little matter of exchange stands to reason. A Jew banker (or such as I have had the honour to know) cannot forgo the privilege of cheating; no, if it be but for a shilling. What do I say—a shilling?—a penny! He will cheat you, in the first place, in the exchanging your note; he will then

cheat you in giving gold for your silver : and though very likely he will invite you to a splendid repast afterwards that shall have cost him a score of thalers to procure, he will have had the satisfaction of robbing you of your *groschen*, as no doubt he would rob his own father or son.

Herr Moses Löwe must have been a very sharp Israelite, indeed, to rob Herr Solomon, or vice versa. The poor fellows are both in prison for a matter of forgery, as I heard last year when passing through Bonn ; and I confess it was not without a little palpitation of the heart (it is a sausage-merchant's now) that I went and took one look at the house where I had first beheld the bright eyes of Minna Löwe.

For let them say as they will, that woman whom a man has once loved *cannot* be the same to him as another. Whenever one of my passions comes into a room, my cheeks flush,—my knees tremble,—I look at her with pleased tenderness and (for the objects of my adoration do not once in forty times know their good fortune) with melancholy, secret wonder. There they are, the same women, and yet not the same ; it is the same nose and eyes, if you will, but not the same looks ; the same voice, but not the same sweet words as of old. The figure moves, and looks, and talks to you ; you know how dear and how different its speech and actions once were ; 'tis the hall with all the lights put out and the garlands dead (as I have said in one of my poems). Did you ever have a pocket-book that once contained five thousand pounds ? Did you ever look at that pocket-book with the money lying in it ? Do you remember how you respected and admired that pocket-book, investing it with a secret awe, imagining it had a superiority to other pocket-books ? I have such a pocket-book ; I keep it now, and often look at it rather tenderly. It cannot be as other portfolios to me. I remember that it once held five thousand pounds.

Thus it is with love. I have empty pocket-books scattered all over Europe of this kind ; and I always go and look at them just for a moment, and the spirit flies back to days gone by, kind eyes look at me as of yore, and echoes of old gentle voices fall tenderly upon the ear. Away ! to the true heart the past *never* is past ; and some day when Death has cleared our dull faculties, and past and future shall be rolled into one, we shall . . .

Well, you were quite right, my good sir, to interrupt me. I can't help it, I am too apt to grow sentimental, and always on the most absurd prettexts. I never know when the fit will come on me, or à propos of what. I never was so jolly in my whole life as one day coming home from a funeral; and once went to a masked ball at Paris, the gaiety of which made me so profoundly miserable that, egad! I wept like Xerxes (wasn't that the fellow's name?), and was sick—sick at heart. This premised, permit me, my friend, to indulge in sentiment à propos of Minna Löwe; for *corbleu*! for three weeks, at least, I adored the wench; and could give any person curious that way a complete psychological history of the passion's rise, progress, and decay;—decay, indeed, why do I say decay? A man does not 'decay' when he tumbles down a well, he drowns there; so is love choked sometimes by abrupt conclusions, falls down wells, and, oh, the dismal truth at the bottom of them!

'If, my lord,' said Herr Moses, counting out the gold fredericks to me, 'you intend to shtay in our town, I hope my daughtersh and I vill have shometimsh de pleashure of your high vell-born shoshiety?'

'The town is a most delightful one, Mr. Löwe,' answered I. 'I am myself an Oxford man, and exceedingly interested about—ahem—about the Byzantine historians, of which I see the university is producing an edition; and I shall make, I think, a considerable stay.' Heaven bless us! 'twas Miss Minna's eyes that had done the business. But for them I should have slept at Coblenz that very night; where, by the way, the Hôtel de la Poste is one of the very best inns in Europe.

A friend had accompanied me to Bonn—a jolly dragoon, who was quite versed in the German language, having spent some time in the Austrian service before he joined us; or in the 'Awthtwian thervith,' as he would call it, with a double-distilled gentility of accent, very difficult to be acquired out of Regent Street. We had quarrelled already thrice on the passage from England—viz. at Rotterdam, at Cologne, and once here; so that when he said he intended to go to Mayence, I at once proclaimed that I intended to stay where I was; and with Miss Minna Löwe's image in my heart, went out and selected lodgings for myself as near as possible to her father's house. Wilder said I might go to—any place I liked; he remained in his

quarters at the hotel, as I found a couple of days afterwards, when I saw the fellow smoking at the gateway in the company of a score of Prussian officers, with whom he had made acquaintance.

I for my part have never been famous for that habit of extemporaneous friendship-making, which some lucky fellows possess. Like most of my countrymen, when I enter a room I always take care to look about with an air as if I heartily despised every one, and wanted to know what the d—l they did there! Among foreigners I feel this especially; for the truth is, right or wrong, I can't help despising the rogues, and feeling manifestly my own superiority. In consequence of this amiable quality, then (in this particular instance of my life), I gave up the *table d'hôte* dinner at the Star as something low and ungentlemanlike, made a point of staring and not answering when people spoke to me, and thus I have no doubt impressed all the world with a sense of my dignity. Instead of dining at the public place, then, I took my repasts alone; though, as Wilder said with some justice, though with a good deal too much *laissez-aller* of tongue, 'You gweat fool, if it'th only becauth you want to be thilent, why don't you thtill dine with uth? You'll get a wegular good dinner inthtead of a bad one; and ath for *thepeaking* to you, depend on it every man in the room will thee you hanged futht!'

'Pray allow me to dine in my own way, Wilder,' says I, in the most dignified way.

'Dine and be d—d!' said the lieutenant, and so I lived solitary and had my own way.

I proposed to take some German lessons; and for this purpose asked the banker, Mr. Löwe, to introduce me to a master. He procured one, a gentleman of his own persuasion; and further, had the kindness to say that his clerk, Mr. Hirsch, should come and sit with me every morning and perfect me in the tongue; so that, with the master I had and the society I kept, I might look to acquire a very decent German pronunciation.

This Hirsch was a little albino of a creature with pinkish eyes, white hair, flame-coloured whiskers, and ear-rings. His eyes jutted out enormously from his countenance, as did his two large, swollen red lips, which had the true Israelitish coarseness. He was always, after a short time,

in and out of my apartments. He brought a dozen messages and ran as many errands for me in the course of the day. My way of addressing him was 'Hirsch, you scoundrel, get my boots!' 'Hirsch, my Levite, brush my coat for me!' 'Run, you stag of Israel, and put this letter in the post!' and with many similar compliments. The little rascal was, to do him justice, as willing as possible, never minded by what name I called him, and above all—came from Minna. He was not the rose; no, indeed, nor anything like it; but as the poet says, 'he had lived beside it'; and was there in all Sharon such a rose as Minna Löwe?

If I did not write with a moral purpose, and because my unfortunate example may act wholesomely upon other young men of fashion, and induce them to learn wisdom, I should not say a single syllable about Minna Löwe, nor all the blunders I committed, nor the humiliation I suffered. There is about a young Englishman of twenty a degree of easy self-confidence, hardly possessed even by a Frenchman. The latter swaggers and bullies about his superiority, taking all opportunities to shriek it into your ears, and to proclaim the infinite merits of himself and his nation; but, upon my word, the bragging of the Frenchman is not so conceited or intolerable as that calm, silent, contemptuous conceit of us young Britons, who think our superiority so well established that it is really not worth arguing upon, and who take upon us to despise thoroughly the whole world through which we pass. We are hated on the Continent, they say, and no wonder. If any other nation were to attempt to domineer over us as we do over Europe, we would hate them as heartily and as furiously as many a Frenchman and Italian does us.

Now when I went abroad I fancied myself one of the finest fellows under the sun. I patronized a banker's dinners as if I did him honour in eating them; I took my place before grave professors and celebrated men, and talked vapid nonsense to them in infamous French, laughing heartily in return at their own manner of pronouncing that language. I set down as a point beyond question that their customs were inferior to our own, and would not in the least scruple, in a calm way, to let my opinion be known. What an agreeable young fellow I must have been!

With these opinions, and my pleasant way of expressing them, I would sit for hours by the side of lovely Minna Löwe, ridiculing with much of that elegant satire for which the English are remarkable, every one of the customs of the country,—the dinners, with the absurd un-English pudding in the very midst of them ; the dresses of the men, with their braided coats and great seal-rings. As for little Hirsch, he formed the constant subject of my raillery with Mademoiselle Minna ; and I gave it as my fixed opinion, that he was only fit to sell sealing-wax and oranges to the coaches in Piccadilly.

‘ Oh, fous avez tant d’esprit, fous autres jeunes Anglais,’ would she say ; and I said, ‘ Oui, nous avons beaucoup d’esprit, beaucoup plus que les Allemands,’ with the utmost simplicity ; and then would half close my eyes, and give her a look that I thought must kill her.

Shall I tell the result of our conversation ? In conversation 1, Minna asked me if I did not think the tea remarkably good, with which she and her sister treated me. She said it came overland from China, that her papa’s correspondent at Petersburg forwarded it to them, and that no such tea was to be had in Germany. On this I seriously believed the tea to be excellent ; and next morning at breakfast little Hirsch walked smirking into my room, with a parcel of six pounds of congo, for which I had the honour of paying eighteen Prussian thalers, being two pounds fourteen shillings of our money.

The next time I called, Herr Moses insisted on regaling me with a glass of Cyprus wine. His brother Löwe of Constantinople was the only person in the world who possessed this precious liquor. Four days afterwards Löwe came to know how I liked the Cyprus wine which I had ordered and would I like another dozen ? On saying that I had not ordered any, that I did not like sweet wine, he answered, ‘ *Pardon !* ’ it had been in my cellar three days, and he would send some excellent *médoc* at a moderate price, and would take no refusal. A basket of *médoc* came that very night in my absence, with a bill directed to the ‘ High Well-born Count von Fitz-Boodle.’ This excessive desire of the Löwe family to serve me made me relax my importunities somewhat. ‘ Ah ! ’ says Minna, with a sigh, the next time I saw her, ‘ have we offended you, Herr George ? You don’t come to see us any more now ! ’

'I'll come to-morrow,' says I; and she gave me a look and a smile which, oh!—'I am a fool, I know I am!' as the honourable member for Montrose said t'other day. And was not Samson ditto? was not Hercules another? Next day she was seated at the vine-leaves as I entered the court. She smiled, and then retreated. She had been on the look-out for me, I knew she had. She held out her little hand to me as I came into the room. Oh, how soft it was and how round! and with a little apricot-coloured glove that—that I have to this day! I had been arranging a little compliment as I came along, something quite new and killing. I had only the heart to say, '*Es ist sehr warm.*'

'Oh, Herr George!' says she; '*lieber Herr George*, what a progress have you made in German! You speak it like a native.'

But somehow I preferred to continue the conversation in French; and it was made up, as I am bound to say, of remarks equally brilliant and appropriate with that one above given. When old Löwe came in I was winding a skein of silk, seated in an enticing attitude, gazing with all my soul at Delilah, who held down her beautiful eyes.

That day they did not sell me any bargains at all; and the next found me, you may be very sure, in the same parlour again, where, in his *Schlafröck*, the old Israelite was smoking his pipe.

'Get away, papa,' said Minna. 'English lords can't bear smoke. I'm sure Herr George dislikes it.'

'Indeed, I smoke occasionally myself,' answered your humble servant.

'Get his lordship a pipe, Minna, my soul's darling!' exclaimed the banker.

'Oh yes! the beautiful long Turkish one,' cried Minna, springing up, and presently returned bearing a long cherry-stick covered with a scarlet and gold cloth, at one end an enamel damber mouthpiece, a gilded pipe at the other. In she came dancing, wand in hand, and looking like a fairy!

'Stop!' she said; 'I must light it for Herr George.' (By Jupiter! there was a way that girl had of pronouncing my name 'George,' which I never heard equalled before or since.) And accordingly, bidding her sister get fire, she put herself in the prettiest attitude ever seen: with one little foot put forward, and her head thrown back, and

a little hand holding the pipe-stick between finger and thumb, and a pair of red lips kissing the amber mouthpiece with the sweetest smile ever mortal saw. Her sister, giggling, lighted the tobacco, and presently you saw issuing from between those beautiful, smiling, red lips of Minna's a little curling, graceful, white smoke, which rose soaring up to the ceiling. I swear, I felt quite faint with the fragrance of it.

When the pipe was lighted, she brought it to me with quite as pretty an attitude and a glance that—Psha! I gave old Moses Löwe fourteen pounds sterling for that pipe that very evening; and as for the mouthpiece, I would not part with it away from me, but I wrapped it up in a glove that I took from the table, and put both into my breast-pocket; and next morning, when Charley Wilder burst suddenly into my room, he found me sitting up in bed in a green silk nightcap, a little apricot-coloured glove lying on the counterpane before me, your humble servant employed in mumbling the mouthpiece as if it were a bit of barley-sugar.

He stopped, stared, burst into a shriek of laughter, and made a rush at the glove on the counterpane; but, in a fury, I sent a large single-volumed Tom Moore (I am not a poetical man, but I must confess I was reading some passages in *Lalla Rookh* that I found applicable to my situation)—I sent, I say, a Tom Moore at his head, which, luckily, missed him; and to which he responded by seizing a bolster and thumping me outrageously. It was lucky that he was a good-natured fellow, and had only resorted to that harmless weapon, for I was in such a fury that I certainly would have murdered him at the least insult.

I did not murder him then; but if he peached a single word upon the subject, I swore I would, and Wilder knew I was a man of my word. He was not unaware of my *tendre* for Minna Löwe, and was for passing some of his delicate light-dragon jokes upon it and her; but these, too, I sternly cut short.

'Why, cuth me, if I don't think you want to mawwy her?' blurted out Wilder.

'Well, sir,' said I, 'and suppose I do?'

'What! mawwy the daughter of that thwindling old-clothe man? I tell you what, Fitth-Boodle, they alwayth thaïd you were mad in the weg'ment, and run me thwough, if I don't think you are.'

'The man,' says I, 'sir, who would address Mademoiselle Löwe in any but an honourable way is a scoundrel; and the man who says a word against her character is a liar!'

After a little further parley (which Wilder would not have continued but that he wanted to borrow money of me), that gentleman retired, declaring that 'I wath ath thulky ath a bear with a thaw head,' and left me to my apricot-coloured glove and my amber mouthpiece.

Wilder's assertion that I was going to act up to opinions which I had always professed, and to marry Minna Löwe, certainly astounded me, and gave me occasion for thought. Marry the daughter of a Jew banker! I, George Fitz-Boodle! That would never do; not unless she had a million to her fortune, at least, and it was not probable that a humble dealer at Bonn could give her so much. But, marry her or not, I could not refrain from the sweet pleasure of falling in love with her, and shut my eyes to the morrow that I might properly enjoy the day. Shortly after Wilder's departure, little Hirsch paid his almost daily visit to me. I determined—and wondered that I had never thought of the scheme before—sagely to sound him regarding Minna's fortune, and to make use of him as my letter and message carrier.

'Ah, Hirsch! my lion of Judah!' says I, 'you have brought me the pipe-stick, have you?'

'Yes, my lord, and seven pounds of the tobacco you said you liked. 'Tis real Syrian, and a great bargain you get it, I promise.'

'Egad!' replied I, affecting an air of much careless ingenuousness, 'Do you know, Hirsch, my boy, that the youngest of the Miss Löwes—Miss Anna, I think you call her—'

'Minna,' said Hirsch, with a grin.

'Well, Minna—Minna, Hirsch, is a devilish fine girl; upon my soul now, she is.'

'Do you really think so?' says Hirsch.

'Pon my honour, I do. And yesterday when she was lighting the pipe-stick, she looked so confoundedly handsome that I—I quite fell in love with her; really I did.'

'Ho! Vell, you do our people great honour, I'm sure,' answered Hirsch.

'Father a warm man?'

'Varm! How do you mean varm?'

‘Why, *rich*. We call a rich man *warm* in England; only you don’t understand the language. How much will he give his daughter?’

‘Oh! very little. Not a veek of your income, my lord,’ said Hirsch.

‘Pooh, pooh! You always talk of me as if I’m rich; but I tell you I am poor—exceedingly poor.’

‘Go away vid you!’ said Hirsch, incredulously. ‘*You* poor! I vish I had a year of your income; that I do’ (and I have no doubt he did, or of the revenue of any one else). ‘I’d be a rich man, and have de best house in Bonn.’

‘Are you so very poor yourself, Hirsch, that you talk in this way?’ asked I.

To which the young Israelite replied, that he had not one dollar to rub against another; that Mr. Löwe was a close man; and finally (upon my pressing the point, like a cunning dog as I was!), that he would do anything to earn a little money.

‘Hirsch,’ said I, like a wicked young reprobate and Don Juan, ‘will you carry a letter to Miss Minna Löwe?’

Now there was no earthly reason why I should have made a twopenny-postman of Mr. Hirsch. I might with just as much ease have given Minna the letter myself. I saw her daily and for hours, and it would be hard if I could not find her for a minute alone, or at least slip a note into her glove or pocket-handkerchief, if secret the note must be. But, I don’t care to own it, I was as ignorant of any love-making which requires mystery as any bishop on the bench, and pitched upon Hirsch, as it were, because in comedies and romances that I had read the hero has always a go-between—a valet, or humble follower—who performs the intrigue of the piece. So I asked Hirsch the above question, ‘Would he carry a letter to Miss Minna Löwe?’

‘Give it me,’ said he, with a grin.

But the deuce of it was, it wasn’t written. Rosina, in the opera, has hers ready in her pocket, and says ‘*Eccolo quà*’ when Figaro makes the same request, so I told Hirsch that I would get it ready. And a very hard task I found it too, in sitting down to compose the document. It shall be in verse, thought I, for Minna understands some English; but there is no rhyme to Minna, as everybody knows, except a cockney, who might make ‘thinner, dinner,

winner,' &c., answer to it. And as for Löwe, it is just as bad. Then it became, as I thought, my painful duty to send her a note in French ; and in French finally it was composed, and I blush now when I think of the nonsense and bad grammar it contained—the conceit above all. The easy vulgar assurance of victory with which I, a raw lad, from the stupidest country in Europe, assailed one of the most beautiful women in the world !

Hirsch took the letter, and to bribe the fellow to silence, I agreed to purchase a great hideous amethyst brooch, which he had offered me a dozen times for sale, and which I had always refused till now. He said it had been graciously received, but as all the family were present in the evening when I called, of course no allusion could be made to the note ; but I thought Minna looked particularly kind, as I sat and lost a couple of fredericks at *écarté* to a very stout Israelite lady, Madame Löwe, junior, the wife of Monsieur Solomon Löwe. I think it was on this night, or the next, that I was induced to purchase a bale of remarkably fine lawn for shirts, for old Löwe had everything to sell, as is not uncommon with men of his profession and persuasion ; and had I expressed a fancy for a coffin or a hod of mortar, I have no doubt Hirsch would have had it at my door next morning.

I went on sending letters to Minna, copying them out of a useful little work called *Le Petit Secrétaire Français*, and easily adapting them to circumstances, by altering a phrase here and there. Day and night I used to dangle about the house. It was provoking, to be sure, that Minna was never alone now ; her sister or Madame Solomon was always with her, and as they naturally spoke German, of which language I knew but few words, my evenings were passed in sighing, ogling, and saying nothing. I must have been a very charming companion. One evening was pretty much like another. Four or five times in the week old Löwe would drop in and sell me a bargain. Berlin iron chains and trinkets for my family at home, Naples soap, a case of *eau de Cologne* ; a beautiful dressing-gown, lined with fur for the winter ; a rifle, one of the famous Frankfort make ; a complete collection of the German classics ; and finally, to my awful disgust, a set of the Byzantine historians.

I must tell you that, although my banking friend had

furnished me with half a stone of Syrian tobacco from his brother at Constantinople, and though the most beautiful lips in the world had first taught me to smoke it, I discovered after a few pipes of the weed, that it was not so much to my taste as that grown in the West Indies; and as his Havana cigars were also not to my liking, I was compelled, not without some scruples of conscience at my infidelity, to procure my smoking supplies elsewhere.

And now I come to the fatal part of my story. Wilder, who was likewise an amateur of the weed, once came to my lodgings in the company of a tobacconist, whom he patronized, and who brought several boxes and samples for inspection. Herr Rohr, which was the gentleman's name, sat down with us, his wares were very good, and—must I own it?—I thought it would be a very clever and prudent thing on my part to exchange some of my rare Syrian against his canaster and Havanas. I vaunted the quality of the goods to him, and, going into the inner room, returned with a packet of the real Syrian. Herr Rohr looked at the parcel rather contemptuously, I thought.

'I have plenty of these goods in my shop,' said he.

'Why, you don't thay tho,' says Wilder, with a grin, 'ith the weal wegular Thywian. My friend Fithth-Boodle got it from hith bankerth, and no mithtake!'

'Was it from Mr. Löwe?' says Rohr, with another provoking sneer.

'Exactly. His brother Israel sent it from Constantinople.'

'Bah!' says Rohr, 'I sold this very tobacco, seven pounds of it, at fourteen groschen a pound, to Miss Minna Löwe and little Mr. Hirsch, who came express to my shop for it. Here's my seal,' says Mr. Rohr. And sure enough he produced, from a very fat and dirty forefinger, a seal, which bore the engraving on the packet.

'You sold that to Miss Minna Löwe?' groaned poor George Fitz-Boodle.

'Yes, and she bated me down half a gros in the price. Heaven help you, sir! she *always* makes the bargains for her father. There's something so pretty about her, that we can't resist her.'

'And do you thell *wineth*, too—Thypwuth and *médoc*, hay?' continued the brute Wilder, enjoying the joke.

'No,' answered Mr. Rohr, with another confounded sneer.

'He makes those himself; but I *have* some very fine *médoc* and Greek wine, if his high-well-born lordship would like a few dozen. Shall I send a panier?'

'*Leave the room, sir!*' here shouted I, in a voice of uncontrollable ferocity, and looked so wildly that little Rohr rushed away in a fright, and Wilder burst into one of his demoniacal laughs again.

'Don't you thee, my good fwiend,' continued he, 'how wegularly thethe people have been doing you? I tell you their chawacterth are known all over the town. There'th not a thtudent in the place but can give you a hithtory of the family. Löwe ith an infarnal old uthuwer, and hith daughterth wegular manthwaphth. At the Thtar, where I dine with the officerth of the garrithon, you and Minna are a thtantard joke. Captain Heerpauk wath caught himself for near six weekth; young Von Twommel wath wemoved by hith fwiends; old Colonel Blitz wath at one time tho nearly gone in love with the elder, that he wouthd have had a divorce from hith lady. Among the thtudenth the mania hath been jutht the thame. Whenever one wath worth plucking, Löwe uthed to have him to hith houthe and wob him, until at latht the wath-cal'th chawacter became tho well known, that the thtudentth in a body have detherted him, and you will find that not one of them will dance with hith daughterth, handthome ath they are. Go down to Godesberg to-night and thee.'

'I *am* going,' answered I; 'the young ladies asked me to drive down in their carriage;' and I flung myself back on the sofa and puffed away volumes of smoke, and tossed and tumbled the live-long day, with a horrible conviction that something of what Wilder had told me might be true, and with a vow to sacrifice, at least, one of the officers who had been laughing at me.

There they were, the scoundrels! in their cursed tight frock-coats and hay-coloured moustachios, twirling round in the waltzes with the citizens' daughters, when, according to promise, I arrived with the Israelitish ladies at the garden at Godesberg, where dancing is carried on twice or thrice in a week. There were the students, with their long pipes, and little caps, and long hair, tipping at the tables under the leaves, or dancing that absurd waltz which has always been the object of my contempt. The fact is, I am not a dancing man.

Students and officers, I thought, every eye was looking at me, as I entered the garden with Miss Minna Löwe on my arm. Wilder tells me that I looked blue with rage, and as if I should cut the throat of any man I met.

We had driven down in old Löwe's landau, the old gentleman himself acting as coachman, with Mr. Hirsch in his best clothes by his side. In the carriage came Madam Solomon, in yellow satin; Miss Löwe, in light green (it is astonishing how persons of a light complexion will wear this detestable colour); Miss Minna was in white muslin, with a pair of black knit gloves on her beautiful arms, a pink ribband round her delicate waist, and a pink scarf on her shoulders, for in those days—and the fashion exists still somewhat on the Rhine—it was the custom of ladies to dress themselves in what we call an evening costume for dinner-time; and so was the lovely Minna attired. As I sat by her on the back seat, I did not say one single word, I confess, but looked unutterable things, and forgot in her beauty all the suspicions of the morning. I hadn't asked her to waltz,—for the fact is, I didn't know how to waltz (though I learned afterwards, as you shall hear), and so only begged her hand for a quadrille.

We entered thus Mr. Blintzner's garden as I have described, the men staring at us, the lovely Minna on my arm. I ordered refreshments for the party; and we sat at a table near the boarded place where the people were dancing. No one came up to ask Minna to waltz, and I confess I was not sorry for it,—for I own to that dog-in-the-manger jealousy which is common to love—no one came but poor little Hirsch, who had been absent to get sandwiches for the ladies, and came up making his bow just as I was asking Minna whether she would give no response to my letters. She looked surprised,—looked at Hirsch, who looked at me, and laying his hand (rather familiarly) upon my arm, put the other paw to his great, red, blubber lips, as if enjoining silence; and, before a word, carried off Minna, and began twisting her round in the waltz.

The little brute had assumed his best clothes for the occasion. He had a white hat and a pair of white gloves; a green satin stock, with profuse studs of jewels in his shirt; a yellow waistcoat, with one of pink cashmere underneath; very short nankeen trousers, and striped silk stockings; and a swallow-tailed, short-waisted, light-brown

coat, with brass buttons; the tails whirled in the wind as he and his partner spun round to a very quick waltz,—not without agility, I confess, on the little scoundrel's part,—and oh, with what incomparable grace on Minna's! The other waltzers cleared away, doubtless to look at her performance; but though such a reptile was below my jealousy, I felt that I should have preferred to the same music to kick the little beast round the circle rather than see his hand encircling such a waist as that.

They only made one or two turns, however, and came back. Minna was blushing very red, and very much agitated.

'Will you take one turn, Fräulein Lisa?' said the active Hirsch; and after a little to-do on the part of the elder sister, she got up, and advanced to the dancing place.

What was my surprise, when the people again cleared off, and left the pair to perform alone! Hirsch and his partner enjoyed their waltz, however, and returned, looking as ill-humoured as possible. The band struck up presently a quadrille tune. I would not receive any of Minna's excuses. She did not wish to dance; she was faint,—she had no *vis-à-vis*. 'Hirsch,' said I, with much courtesy, 'take out Madam Solomon, and come and dance.' We advanced—big Mrs. Solomon and Hirsch, Minna and I,—Miss Lisa remaining with her papa over the Rhine wine and sandwiches.

There were at least twenty couple, who were mustering to make a quadrille when we advanced. Minna blushed scarlet, and I felt her trembling on my arm; no doubt 'twas from joy at dancing with the fashionable young Engländer. Hirsch, with a low bow and a scrape, led Madam Solomon opposite us, and put himself in the fifth position. It *was* rather disgusting, certainly, for George Savage Fitz-Boodle to be dancing *vis-à-vis* with such an animal as that!

Mr. Hirsch clapped his hands with a knowing air, to begin. I looked up from Minna (what I had been whispering to her must not be concealed,—in fact, I had said so previously, *Es ist sehr warm*; but I said it with an accent that must have gone to her heart),—when I say I looked up from her lovely face, I found that every one of the other couples had retired, and that we four were left to dance the quadrille by ourselves!

Yes, by Heavens, it was so ! Minna, from being scarlet, turned ghastly pale, and would have fallen back had I not encircled her with my arm. 'I'm ill,' said she ; 'let me go back to my father.' 'You *must* dance,' said I, and held up my clenched fist at Hirsch, who I thought would have moved off too ; on which the little fellow was compelled to stop. And so we four went through the quadrille.

The first figure seemed to me to last a hundred thousand years. I don't know how Minna did not fall down and faint ; but gathering courage all of a sudden, and throwing a quick, fierce look round about her, as if in defiance, and a look which made my little angel for a moment look like a little demon, she went through the dance with as much gracefulness as a duchess. As for me,—at first the whole air seemed to be peopled with grinning faces, and I moved about almost choked with rage and passion. Then gradually the film of fury wore off, and I became wonderfully calm,—nay, had the leisure to look at Monsieur Hirsch, who performed all the steps with wonderful accuracy ; and at every one of the faces round about it, officers, students, and citizens. None of the gentlemen, probably, liked my face—for theirs wore, as I looked at them, a very grave and demure expression. But as Minna was dancing, I heard a voice behind her cry sneeringly, 'Brava !' I turned quickly round, and caught the speaker. He turned very red, and so betrayed himself. Our eyes met,—it was a settled thing. There was no need of any further arrangement, and it was then, as I have said, that the film cleared off ; and I have to thank Capt. Heerpauk for getting through the quadrille without an apoplexy.

'Did you hear that—that voice, Herr George ?' said Miss Minna, looking beseechingly in my face, and trembling on my arm, as I led her back to her father. Poor soul ! I saw it all at once. She loved me,—I knew she did, and trembled lest I should run into any danger. I stuttered, stammered, vowed I did not hear it ; at the same time swearing inwardly an oath of the largest dimensions, that I would cut the throat whence that 'Brava !' issued. I left my lady for a moment, and finding Wilder out, pointed the man to him.

'Oh, Heerpauk,' says he. 'What do you want with him ?'

'Charley,' says I, with much heroism and ferocity, 'I

want to shoot him ; just tell him so.' And when, on demurring, I swore I would go and pull the captain's nose on the ground, Wilder agreed to settle the business for me ; and I returned to our party.

It was quite clear that we could not stay longer in the gardens. Löwe's carriage was not to come for an hour yet ; for the banker would not expend money in stabling his horses at the inn, and had accordingly sent them back to Bonn. What should we do ? There is a ruined castle at Godesberg, which looks down upon the fair green plain of the Rhine, where Mr. Blintzner's house stands (and let the reader be thankful that I don't give a description of scenery here) : there is, I say, a castle at Godesberg. '*Explorons le shatto,*' says I, which elegant French Hirsch translated ; and this suggestion was adopted by the five Israelites, to the fairest of whom I offered my arm. The lovely Minna took it, and away we went ; Wilder, who was standing at the gate, giving me a nod, to say all was right. I saw him presently strolling up the hill after me, with a Prussian officer, with whom he was talking. Old Löwe was with his daughter, and as the old banker was infirm, the pair walked but slowly. Monsieur Hirsch had given his arm to Madam Solomon. She was a fat woman ; the consequence was, that Minna and I were soon considerably ahead of the rest of the party, and were ascending the hill alone. I said several things to her, such as only lovers say. '*Com il fay bo issy,*' says I, in the most insinuating way. No answer. '*Es ist etwas kalt,*' even I continued, admirably varying my phrase. She did not speak ; she was agitated by the events of the evening, and no wonder.

That fair round arm resting on mine,—that lovely creature walking by my side in the calm moonlight—the silver Rhine flashing before us, with Drachenfels and the Seven Mountains rising clear in the distance,—the music of the dance coming up to us from the plain below,—the path winding every now and then into the darkest foliage, and at the next moment giving us rich views of the moonlit river and plain below. Could any man but feel the influence of a scene so exquisitely lovely ?

'Minna,' says I, as she wouldn't speak,—'Minna, I love you ; you have known it long, long ago, I know you have. Nay, do not withdraw your hand ; your heart has spoken for me. Be mine then !' and taking her hand, I kissed it

rapturously, and should have proceeded to her cheek, no doubt, when,—she gave me a swinging box on the ear, started back, and incontinently fell a-screaming as loudly as any woman ever did.

‘Minna, Minna,’ I heard the voice of that cursed Hirsch shouting, ‘Minna. *meine Gattin!*’ and he rushed up the hill; and Minna flung herself in his arms, crying, ‘Lorenzo, my husband, save me!’

The Löwe family, Wilder, and his friend, came skurrying up the hill at the same time; and we formed what in the theatres they call a tableau.

‘You coward!’ says Minna, her eyes flashing fire, ‘who could see a woman insulted, and never defend her?’

‘You coward!’ roared Hirsch, ‘coward as well as profligate! You communicated to me your lawless love for this angel.—to me, her affianced husband; and you had the audacity to send her letters, not one of which, so help me Heaven, has been received. Yes, you will laugh at Jews—will you, you brutal Englishman? You will insult our people,—will you, you stupid islander? Psha! I spit upon you! and here Monsieur Hirsch snapped his fingers in my face, holding Minna at the same time round the waist, who thus became the little monster’s buckler.

They presently walked away, and left me in a pleasant condition. I was actually going to fight a duel on the morrow for the sake of this fury, and it appeared she had flung me off for cowardice. I had allowed myself to be swindled by her father, and insulted by her filthy little bridegroom, and for what? All the consolation I got from Wilder was,—‘I told you tho, my boy, but you wouldn’t lithn. you gweat thoopid, blundewing ignowamuth; and now I shall have to thee you shot and buwied to-mowow; and I dare thay you won’t even remember me in your will. Captain Schläger,’ continued he, presenting me to his companion, ‘Mr. Fitz-Boodle; the captain acts for Heerpauk in the morning, and we were just talking matters over, when Webecca yonder quied out, and we found her in the armth of Bwian de Bois-Guilbert here.’

Captain Schläger was a little, social, good-humoured man, with a moustachio of a straw and silver mixed, and a brilliant purple sabre-cut across a rose-coloured nose. He had the iron cross at his botton-hole, and looked, as he was,

a fierce little fighter. But he was too kind-hearted to allow of two boys needlessly cutting each other's throats; and much to the disappointment of Wilder, doubtless, who had been my second in the Martingale affair, and enjoyed no better sport, he said in English, laughing, 'Vell, make your mind easy, my goot young man, I tink you af got into enough sgraves about dis tam Shewess; and dat you and Heerpauk haf no need to blow each other's brains off.'

'Ath for Fittth apologithing,' burst out Wilder, 'that'th out of the questhtion. He gave the challenge, you know; and how the *dooth* ith he to apologithe now?'

'He gave the challenge, and you took it, and you are de greatest fool of de two. I say the two young men shall not fight;' and then the honest captain entered into a history of the worthy family of Israel, which would have saved me at least fifty pounds had I known it sooner. It did not differ in substance from what Rohr and Wilder had both told me in the morning. The venerable Löwe was a great thief and extortioner; the daughters were employed as decoy-ducks, in the first place, for the university and the garrison, and afterwards for young strangers, such as my wise self, who visited the place. There was some very sad story about the elder Miss Löwe and a tutor from St. John's College, Cambridge, who came to Bonn on a reading tour; but I am not at liberty to set down here the particulars. And with regard to Minna, there was a still more dismal history. A fine, handsome, young student, the pride of the university, had first ruined himself through the offices of the father, and then shot himself for love of the daughter; from which time the whole town had put the family into Coventry; nor had they appeared for two years in public until upon the present occasion with me. As for Monsieur Hirsch, he did not care. He was of a rich Frankfort family of the peoples, serving his apprenticeship with Löwe, a cousin, and the destined husband of the younger daughter. He traded as much as he could on his own account, and would run upon any errand, and buy or sell anything for a consideration. And so, instead of fighting Captain Heerpauk, I agreed willingly enough to go back to the hotel at Godesberg, and shake hands with that officer. The reconciliation, or, rather, the acquaintance between us, was effected over a bottle of wine, at Mr. Blintzner's hotel; and we rode comfortably back in a droshky together to Bonn,

where the friendship was still more closely cemented by a supper. At the close of the repast, Heerpauk made a speech on England, fatherland, and German truth and love, and kindly saluted me with a kiss, which is at any lady's service who peruses this little narrative.

As for Mr. Hirsch, it must be confessed, to my shame, that the next morning a gentleman having the air of an old-clothes man off duty presented me with an envelope, containing six letters of my composition addressed to Miss Minna Löwe (among them was a little poem in English, which has since called tears from the eyes of more than one lovely girl); and, furthermore, a letter from himself, in which he, Baron Hirsch, of Hirschenwald (the scoundrel, like my friend Wilder, purchased his title in the 'Awthtwhian Thervith')—in which he, I say, Baron Hirsch, of Hirschenwald, challenges me for insulting Miss Minna Löwe, or demanded an apology.

This, I said, Mr. Hirsch might have whenever he chose to come and fetch it, pointing to a horsewhip which lay in a corner; but that he must come early, as I proposed to quit Bonn the next morning. The baron's friend, hearing this, asked whether I would like some remarkably fine cigars for my excursion, which he could give me a great bargain? He was then shown to the door by my body-servant; nor did Hirsch von Hirschenwald come for the apology.

Twice every year, however, I get a letter from him, dated Frankfort, and proposing to make me a present of a splendid palace in Austria or Bohemia, or 200,000 florins, should I prefer money. I saw his lady at Frankfort only last year, in a front box at the theatre, loaded with diamonds, and at least sixteen stone in weight.

Ah! Minna, Minna! thou mayest grow to be as ugly as sin, and as fat as Daniel Lambert, but I have the amber mouthpiece still, and swear that the prettiest lips in Jewry have kissed it!

The MS. here concludes with a rude design of a young lady smoking a pipe.

DOROTHEA

[*Fraser's Magazine*, January, 1843.]

THE reason why my Memoirs have not been continued with that regularity which, I believe, is considered requisite by professional persons, in order to ensure the success of their work, is a very simple one—I have been otherwise engaged; and as I do not care one straw whether the public do or do not like my speculations (heartily pitying, and at the same time despising, those poor devils who write under different circumstances)—as I say, I was in Scotland shooting grouse for some time past, coming home deucedly tired of evenings, which I devoted to a cigar and a glass of toddy, it was quite impossible to satisfy the curiosity of the public. I bagged 1,114 brace of grouse in sixty days, besides dancing in kilt before her M—y at Bl—r Ath-l. By the way, when Mr. F—x M—le gives away cairngorms, he may as well say *whose property* they are. I lent the man the very stone out of a snuff-mull with which Charles Edward complimented my great-great-aunt, Flora MacWhirter.

The worthy publisher sent me down his Magazine to Dunkeld (a good deal of it will be found in wadding over the moors, and perhaps in the birds which I sent him), and, at the same time, he dispatched some critiques, both epistolary and newspaperacious upon the former chapter of my Memoirs. The most indignant of the manuscript critiques came from a member of the Hebrew persuasion. And what do you think is the opinion of this Lion of Judah? Simply that George Savage Fitz-Boodle is a false name, assumed by some coward, whose intention it is to insult the Jewish religion! He says that my history of the Löwe family is a dastardly attack upon the people! How is it so? If I say that an individual Christian is a rogue, do I impugn the professors of the whole Christian religion? Can my Hebrew critic say that a Hebrew banker never cheated in matters of exchange, or that a Hebrew

was never guilty of a roguery ? If so, what was the gold-dust robbery, and why is Ikey Solomons at Botany Bay ? No ; the Lion of Judah may be a good lion, but he is a deucedly bad arguer,—nay, he is a bad lion, he roars before he is hurt. Be calm, thou red-maned desert-roarer, the arrows of Fitz-Boodle have no poison at their tip, and are shot only in play.

I never wished to attack the Jewish nation, far from it ; I have three bills now out ; nor is he right in saying that I have made a dastardly statement, which I have given under a false name ; just the contrary, my name is, as everybody knows, my real name—it is the *statement* which is false, and I confess there is not one word of truth in it—I never knew, to my knowledge, any Hirsch or Löwe in my life ; I never was with Minna Löwe ; the adventures never did occur at Bonn. Is my friend now satisfied ? Let him remember, in the first place, that the tale is related of individuals, and not of his people at large ; and in the second place, that the statement is not true. If *that* won't satisfy him, what will ? Rabbi, let us part in peace ! Neither thee nor thy like would George Fitz-Boodle ever willingly harm—neither thee nor any bearded nor unbearded man. If there be no worse rogues in Jewry, the people is more lucky than the rest of the world, and the fact is good to be known.

And now for the second objections. These are mainly of one kind—most of the journalists, from whose works pleasing extracts have been made, concurring in stating, that the last paper, which the Hebrew thought so dangerous, was, what is worse still, exceedingly stupid.

This disgusting unanimity of sentiment at first annoyed me a good deal, for I was pained to think that success so soon bred envy, and that the members of the British press could not bear to see an amateur enter the lists with them, and carry off laurels for which they had been striving long years in vain. Is there no honesty left in the world ? I thought. And the thought gave me extreme pain, for, though (as in the Hebrew case above mentioned) I love occasionally to disport with the follies and expose the vices of individuals, to attribute envy to a whole class is extremely disagreeable to one whose feelings are more than ordinarily benevolent and pure.

An idea here struck me, I said to myself, ‘ Fitz-Boodle !

perhaps the paper *is* stupid, and the critics are right.' I read the paper: I found that it *was* abominably stupid, and, as I fell asleep over it, an immense repose and calm came over my mind, and I woke reconciled with human nature.

Let authors consider this above fact well, and draw their profit from it. I have met with many men, who, like myself, fancy themselves the victims of a conspiracy—martyrs; but, in the long run, the world and the critics of nowadays are generally right; they praise too much perhaps, they puff a small reputation into a huge one, but they do not neglect much that is good; and, if literary gentlemen would but bear this truth in mind, what a deal of pain and trouble might they spare themselves! There would be no despair, ill-humour, no quarrelling with your fellow-creatures, nor jaundiced moody looks upon nature and the world. Instead of crying, 'The world is wicked—all men are bad,' is it not wiser, my brethren, to say, 'I am an ass'? Let me be content to know that, nor anathematize universal mankind for not believing in me. It is a well-known fact, that no natural man can see the length of his own ears; it is only the glass—the reflection that shows them to him. Let the critics be our glass, I am content to believe that they are pretty honest, that they are not actuated by personal motives of hatred in falling foul of me and others; and this being premised, I resume the narration of my adventures. If *this* chapter don't please them, they *must*, indeed, be very hard to amuse.

Beyond sparring and cricket, I do not recollect I learned anything useful at Slaughter House School, where I was educated (according to an old family tradition, which sends particular generations of gentlemen to particular schools in the kingdom; and such is the force of habit, that, though I hate the place, I shall send my own son thither too, should I marry any day). I say I learned little that was useful at Slaughter House, and nothing that was ornamental. I would as soon have thought of learning to dance as of learning to climb chimneys. Up to the age of seventeen, as I have shown, I had a great contempt for the female race, and when age brought with it warmer and juster sentiments, where was I?—I could no more dance nor prattle to a young girl than a young bear could. I have seen the ugliest, little, low-bred wretches, carrying off young and lovely creatures, twirling with them in waltzes, whispering between their

glossy curls in quadrilles, simpering with perfect equanimity, and cutting *pas* in that abominable cavalier seul, until my soul grew sick with fury. In a word, I determined to learn to dance.

But such things are hard to be acquired late in life, when the bones and the habits of a man are formed. Look at a man in a hunting-field who has not been taught to ride as a boy. All the pluck and courage in the world will not make the man of him that I am, or as any man who has had the advantages of early education in the field.

In the same way with dancing. Though I went to work with immense energy, both in Brewer Street, Golden Square (with an advertising fellow), and afterwards with old Coulon at Paris, I never was able to be *easy* in dancing; and though little Coulon instructed me in a smile, it was a cursed forced one, that looked like the grin of a person in extreme agony. I once caught sight of it in a glass, and have hardly ever smiled since.

Most young men about London have gone through that strange secret ordeal of the dancing-school. I am given to understand that young snobs from attorneys' offices, banks, shops, and the like, make not the least mystery of their proceedings in the saltatory line, but trip gaily, with pumps in hand, to some dancing-place about Soho, waltz and quadrille it with Miss Greengrocer or Miss Butcher, and fancy they have had rather a pleasant evening. There is one house in Dover Street, where, behind a dirty curtain, such figures may be seen hopping every night, to a perpetual fiddling; and I have stood sometimes wondering in the street, with about six blackguard boys wondering too, at the strange contortions of the figures jumping up and down to the mysterious squeaking of the kit. Have they no shame, *ces gens*? Are such degrading initiations to be held in public? No, the snob may, but the man of refined mind never can submit to show himself in public labouring at the apprenticeship of this most absurd art. It is owing, perhaps, to this modesty, and the fact that I had no sisters at home, that I have never thoroughly been able to dance; for though I always arrive at the end of a quadrille (and thank Heaven for it too!) and though, I believe, I make no mistake in particular, yet I solemnly confess I have never been able thoroughly to comprehend the mysteries of it, or what I have been about from the beginning to the end of the dance. I

always look at the lady opposite, and do as she does ; if *she* did not know how to dance, *par hasard*, it would be all up ; but if they can't do anything else, women can dance, let us give them that praise at least.

In London, then, for a considerable time, I used to get up at eight o'clock in the morning, and pass an hour alone with Mr. Wilkinson, of the Theatres Royal, in Golden Square ;—an hour alone. It was 'one, two, three ; one, two, three—now jump—right foot more out, Mr. Smith ; and if you *could*, try and look a little more cheerful ; your partner, sir, would like you half the better.' Wilkinson called me Smith, for the fact is, I did not tell him my real name, nor (thank Heaven!) does he know it to this day.

I never breathed a word of my doings to any soul among my friends ; once a pack of them met me in the strange neighbourhood, when, I am ashamed to say, I muttered something about a 'little French milliner,' and walked off, looking as knowing as I could.

In Paris, two Cambridge men and myself, who happened to be staying at a boarding-house together, agreed to go to Coulon, a little creature of four feet high with a pigtail. His room was hung round with glasses. He made us take off our coats, and dance each before a mirror. Once he was standing before us playing on his kit—the sight of the little master and the pupil was so supremely ridiculous, that I burst into a yell of laughter, which so offended the old man, that he walked away abruptly, and begged me not to repeat my visits. Nor did I. I was just getting into waltzing then, but determined to drop waltzing and content myself with quadrilling for the rest of my days.

This was all very well in France and England ; but in Germany, what was I to do ? What did Hercules do when Omphale captivated him ? What did Rinaldo do when Armida fixed upon him her twinkling eyes ? Nay, to cut all historical instances short, by going at once to the earliest, what did Adam do when Eve tempted him ? he yielded and became her slave, and so I do heartily trust every honest man will yield until the end of the world—he has no heart who will not. When I was in Germany, I say, I began to learn to *waltz*. The reader from this will no doubt expect that some new love-adventures befell me—nor will his gentle heart be disappointed. Two deep and tremendous

incidents occurred which shall be notified on the present occasion.

The reader, perhaps, remembers the brief appearance of his Highness the Duke of Kalbsbraten-Pumpnickel at B—— House, in the first part of my Memoirs, at that unlucky period of my life when the Duke was led to remark the odour about my clothes, which lost me the hand of Mary M'Alister. After the upshot of the affair with Minna Löwe (I cannot say but that for a time I was dreadfully cut up by her behaviour), I somehow found myself in his Highness's territories, of which anybody may read a description in the *Almanach de Gotha*. His Highness's father, as is well known, married Emilia Kunegunda Thomasina Charleria Emanuela Louisa Georgina, Princess of Saxe-Pumpnickel, and a cousin of his Highness the Duke. Thus the two principalities were united under one happy sovereign in the person of Philibert Sigismund Emanuel Maria, the reigning Duke, who has received from his country (on account of the celebrated pump which he erected in the market-place of Kalbsbraten) the well-merited appellation of the Magnificent. The allegory which the statues round about the pump represent, is of a very mysterious and complicated sort. Minerva is observed leading up Ceres to a river-god, who has his arms round the neck of Pomona ; while Mars (in a full-bottomed wig) is driven away by Peace, under whose mantle two lovely children, representing the Duke's two provinces, repose. The celebrated Speck is, as need scarcely be said, the author of this piece ; and of other magnificent edifices in the *Residenz*, such as the guard-room, the skittle-hall (*Grossherzoglich Kalbsbraten-Pumpnickelisch Schkittelspielsaal*), &c., and the superb sentry-boxes before the grand-ducal palace. He is Knight Grand Cross of the ancient Kartoffel Order, as, indeed, is almost every one else in his Highness's dominions.

The town of Kalbsbraten contains a population of two thousand inhabitants, and a palace which would accommodate about six times that number. The principality sends three and a half men to the German Confederation, who are commanded by a general (excellency), two major-generals, and sixty-four officers of lower grades ; all noble, all knights of the order, and almost all chamberlains to his Highness the Grand Duke. An excellent band of eighty performers is the admiration of the surrounding country,

and leads the Grand-Ducal troops to battle in time of war. Only three of the contingent of soldiers returned from the battle of Waterloo, where they won much honour; the remainder was cut to pieces on that glorious day.

There is a chamber of representatives (which, however, nothing can induce to sit), home and foreign ministers, residents from neighbouring courts, law presidents, town councils, &c., all the adjuncts of a big or little government. The court has its chamberlains and marshals, the Grand Duchess her noble ladies in waiting and blushing maids of honour. Thou wert one, Dorothea! Dost remember the poor young Englander? We parted in anger; but I think—I think thou hast not forgotten him.

The way in which I have Dorothea von Speck present to my mind is this,—not as I first saw her in the garden, for her hair was in bandeaux then, and a large Leghorn hat, with a deep riband, covered half her fair face,—not in a morning-dress, which, by the way, was none of the newest nor the best made—but as I saw her afterwards at a ball at the pleasant, splendid little court, where she moved the most beautiful of the beauties of Kalbsbraten. The grand saloon of the palace is lighted—the Grand Duke and his officers, the Duchess and her ladies, have passed through. I, in my uniform of the —th, and a number of young fellows (who are evidently admiring my legs and envying my *distingué* appearance), are waiting round the entrance-door, where a huge Heyduke is standing, and announcing the titles of the guests as they arrive.

‘HERR OBERHOF- UND BAU-INSPEKTOR VON SPECK!’ shouts the Heyduke; and the little inspector comes in. His lady is on his arm—huge, in towering plumes, and her favourite costume of light blue. Fair women always dress in light blue or light green; and Frau von Speck is very fair and stout.

But who comes behind her? Lieber Himmel! It is Dorothea! Did earth, among all the flowers which have sprung from its bosom, produce ever one more beautiful? She was none of your heavenly beauties, I tell you. She had nothing ethereal about her. No, sir; she was of the earth earthy, and must have weighed ten stone four or five, if she weighed an ounce. She had none of your Chinese feet, nor waspy, unhealthy waists, which those may admire who will. No: Dora’s foot was a good stout one; you could

see her ankle (if her robe was short enough) without the aid of a microscope ; and that envious, little, sour, skinny Amalia von Mangelwürzel used to hold up her four fingers, and say (the two girls were most intimate friends, of course), 'Dear Dorothea's vaist is so much dicker as dis ;' and so I have no doubt it was.

But what then ? Goethe sings in one of his divine epigrams :—

Epicures vaunting their taste, entitle me vulgar and savage :
Give them their Brussels-sprouts, but I am contented with cabbage.

I hate your little women, that is when I am in love with a tall one ; and who would not have loved Dorothea ?

Fancy her, then, if you please, about five feet four inches high—fancy her in the family colour of light blue, a little scarf covering the most brilliant shoulders in the world ; and a pair of gloves clinging close round an arm that may, perhaps, be somewhat too large now, but that Juno might have envied then. After the fashion of young ladies on the Continent, she wears no jewels or gimcracks ; her only ornament is a wreath of vine-leaves in her hair, with little clusters of artificial grapes. Down on her shoulders falls the brown hair, in rich liberal clusters ; all that health, and good humour, and beauty can do for the face, kind Nature has done for hers. Her eyes are frank, sparkling, and kind. As for her cheeks, what paint-box or dictionary contains pigments or words to describe their red ? They say she opens her mouth and smiles always to show the dimples in her cheeks. Psha ! she smiles because she is happy, and kind, and good-humoured, and not because her teeth are little pearls.

All the young fellows crowd up to ask her to dance, and, taking from her waist a little mother-of-pearl remembrancer, she notes them down. Old Schnabel for the polonaise ; Klingenspoehr, first waltz ; Haarbart, second waltz ; Count Hornpieper (the Danish envoy), third ; and so on. I have said why *I* could not ask her to waltz, and turned away with a pang, and played écarté with Colonel Trumppack all night.

In thus introducing this lovely creature in her ball-costume, I have been somewhat premature, and had best go back to the beginning of the history of my acquaintance with her.

Dorothea, then, was the daughter of the celebrated Speck before mentioned. It is one of the oldest names in Germany, where her father's and mother's houses, those of Speck and Eyer, are loved wherever they are known. Unlike his warlike progenitor, Lorenzo von Speck, Dorothea's father had early shown himself a passionate admirer of art; had quitted home to study architecture in Italy, and had become celebrated throughout Europe, and been appointed Oberhofarchitekt and Kunst- und Bau-Inspektor of the united principalities. They are but four miles wide, and his genius has consequently but little room to play. What art can do, however, he does. The palace is frequently whitewashed under his eyes; the theatre painted occasionally; the noble public buildings erected, of which I have already made mention.

Smarting with recollections of Minna, I had come to Kalbsbraten, scarce knowing whither I went; and having, in about ten minutes, seen the curiosities of the place (I did not care to see the king's palace, for chairs and tables have no great charm for me), I had ordered horses, and wanted to get on I cared not whither, when Fate threw Dorothea in my way. I was yawning back to the hotel through the palace-garden, a valet-de-place at my side, when I saw a young lady seated under a tree reading a novel, her mamma on the same bench (a fat woman in light blue) knitting a stocking, and two officers, choked in their stays, with various orders on their spinach-coloured coats, standing by in first attitudes—the one was caressing the fat-lady-in-blue's little dog; the other was twirling his own moustache, which was already as nearly as possible curled into his own eye.

I don't know how it is, but I hate to see men evidently intimate with nice-looking women, and on good terms with themselves. There's something annoying in their cursed complacency—their evident sunshiny happiness. I've no woman to make sunshine for *me*; and yet my heart tells me, that not one, but several such suns, would do good to my system.

'Who are those pert-looking officers,' says I, peevishly, to the guide, 'who are talking to those vulgar-looking women?'

'The big one, with the epaulets, is Major von Schnabel; the little one, with the pale face, is Stiefel von Klingenspoehr.'

‘And the big blue woman?’

‘The Grand-Ducal Pumpernickelian-court-architectress and Upper-Palace-and-building-inspectress von Speck, born v. Eyer,’ replied the guide. ‘Your well-born honour has seen the pump in the market-place; that is the work of the great Von Speck.’

‘And yonder young person?’

‘Mr. Court-architect’s daughter; the Fräulein Dorothea.’

Dorothea looked up from her novel here, and turned her face towards the stranger who was passing, and then blushing turned it down again. Schnabel looked at me with a scowl, Klingenspoehr with a simper, the dog with a yelp, the fat lady in blue just gave one glance, and seemed, I thought, rather well pleased. ‘Silence, Lischen!’ said she to the dog. ‘Go on, darling Dorothea,’ she added, to her daughter, who continued her novel.

Her voice was a little tremulous, but very low and rich. For some reason or other, on getting back to the inn, I countermanded the horses, and said I would stay for the night.

I not only stayed that night, but many, many afterwards; and as for the manner in which I became acquainted with the Speck family, why, it was a good joke against me at the time, and I did not like then to have it known, but now it may as well come out at once. Speck, as everybody knows, lives in the market-place, opposite his grand work of art, the town-pump, or fountain. I bought a large sheet of paper, and having a knack at drawing, sat down, with the greatest gravity, before the pump, and sketched it for several hours. I knew it would bring out old Speck to see. At first he contented himself by flattening his nose against the window-glasses of his study, and looking what the Engländer was about. Then he put on his grey cap with the huge green shade, and sauntered to the door: then he walked round me, and formed one of a band of street-idlers who were looking on: then at last he could restrain himself no more, but, pulling off his cap, with a low bow, began to discourse upon arts and architecture in particular.

‘It is curious,’ says he, ‘that you have taken the same view of which a print has been engraved.’

‘That is extraordinary,’ says I (though it wasn’t, for

I had traced my drawing at a window off the very print in question). I added that I was, like all the world, immensely struck with the beauty of the edifice ; heard of it at Rome, where it was considered to be superior to any of the celebrated fountains of that capital of the fine arts ; finally, that if, perhaps, the celebrated fountain of Aldgate in London might compare with it, Kalbsbraten building, *except* in that case, was incomparable.

This speech I addressed in French, of which the worthy Hof-architekt understood somewhat, and continuing to reply in German, our conversation grew pretty close. It is singular that I can talk to a man, and pay him compliments with the utmost gravity, whereas, to a woman, I at once lose all self-possession, and have never said a pretty thing in my life.

My operations on old Speck were so conducted, that in a quarter of an hour I had elicited from him an invitation to go over the town with him, and see its architectural beauties. So we walked through the huge half-furnished chambers of the palace, we panted up the copper pinnacle of the church-tower, we went to see the Museum and Gymnasium, and coming back into the market-place again, what could the Hof-architekt do but offer me a glass of wine and a seat in his house ? He introduced me to his *Gattin*, his Leocadia (the fat woman in blue), 'as a young world-observer, and worthy art-friend, a young scion of British Adel, who had come to refresh himself at the Urquellen of his race, and see his brethren of the great family of Hermann.'

I saw instantly that the old fellow was of a romantic turn, from this rhodomontade to his lady : nor was she a whit less so ; nor was Dorothea less sentimental than her mamma. She knew everything regarding the literature of Albion, as she was pleased to call it ; and asked me news of all the famous writers there. I told her that Miss Edgeworth was one of the loveliest young beauties at our court ; I described to her Lady Morgan, herself as beautiful as the wild Irish girl she drew ; I promised to give her a signature of Mrs. Hemans (which I wrote for her that very evening) ; and described a fox-hunt, at which I had seen Thomas Moore and Samuel Rogers, Esquires ; and a boxing-match, in which the athletic author of *Pelham* was pitched against the hardy mountain-

bard, Wordsworth. You see my education was not neglected, for though I have never read the works of the above-named ladies and gentlemen, yet I knew their names well enough.

Time passed away.—I, perhaps, was never so brilliant in conversation as when excited by the Assmannshäuser and the brilliant eyes of Dorothea that day. She and her parents had dined at their usual heathen hour; but I was, I don't care to own it, so smitten, that, for the first time in my life, I did not even miss the meal, and talked on until six o'clock, when tea was served. Madame Speck said they always drank it; and so placing a teaspoonful of bohea in a cauldron of water, she placidly handed out this decoction, which we took with cakes and tartines. I leave you to imagine how disgusted Klingenspoehr and Schnabel looked when they stepped in as usual that evening to make their party of whist with the Speck family! Down they were obliged to sit—and the lovely Dorothea, for that night, declined to play altogether, and—sat on the sofa by me.

What we talked about, who shall tell? I would not, for my part, break the secret of one of those delicious conversations, of which I and every man in his time have held so many. You begin, very probably, about the weather—'tis a common subject, but what sentiments the genius of Love can fling into it! I have often, for my part, said to the girl of my heart for the time being, 'It's a fine day,' or, 'It's a rainy morning!' in a way that has brought tears to her eyes. Something beats in your heart, and twangle! a corresponding string thrills and echoes in hers. You offer her anything—her knitting-needles, a slice of bread-and-butter—what causes the grateful blush with which she accepts the one or the other? Why, she sees your heart handed over to her upon the needles, and the bread-and-butter is to her a sandwich with love inside it. If you say to your grandmother, 'Ma'am, it's a fine day,' or what not, she would have no other meaning than their outward and visible view, but say so to the girl you love, and she understands a thousand mystic meanings in them. Thus in a word, though Dorothea and I did not, probably, on the first night of our meeting, talk of anything more than the weather, or trumps, or some subjects which, to such listeners as Schnabel

and Klingenspoehr and others, might appear quite ordinary, yet to *us* they had a different signification, of which Love alone held the key.

Without further ado then, after the occurrences of that evening, I determined on staying at Kalbsbraten, and presenting my card the next day to the Hof-Marshall, requesting to have the honour of being presented to his highness the prince, at one of whose court-balls my Dorothea appeared as I have described her.

It was summer when I first arrived at Kalbsbraten. The little court was removed to Siegmundslust, his highness's country-seat: no balls were taking place, and, in consequence, I held my own with Dorothea pretty well. I treated her admirer Lieutenant Klingenspoehr with perfect scorn, had a manifest advantage over Major Schnabel, and used somehow to meet the fair one every day walking in company with her mamma in the palace garden, or sitting under the acacias, with Belotte in her mother's lap, and the favourite romance beside her. Dear, dear Dorothea! what a number of novels she must have read in her time! She confessed to me that she had been in love with Uncas, with Saint-Preux, with Ivanhoe, and with hosts of German heroes of romance; and when I asked her if she, whose heart was so tender towards imaginary youths, had never had a preference for any one of her living adorers, she only looked, and blushed, and sighed, and said nothing.

You see I had got on as well as man could do, until the confounded court season and the balls began, and then—why, then came my usual luck.

Waltzing is a part of a German girl's life. With the best will in the world, which, I doubt not, she entertains for me, for I never put the matter of marriage directly to her—Dorothea could not go to balls and not waltz. It was madness to me to see her whirling round the room with officers, *attachés*, prim little chamberlains with gold keys and embroidered coats, her hair floating in the wind, her hand reposing upon the abominable little dancer's epaulet, her good-humoured face lighted up with still greater satisfaction. I saw that I must learn to waltz too, and took my measures accordingly.

The leader of the ballet at the Kalbsbraten theatre in my time was Springbock, from Vienna. He had been

a regular Zephyr once, 'twas said, in his younger days ; and though now fifteen stone weight, I can, *hélas !* recommend him conscientiously as a master ; and determined to take some lessons from him in the art which I had neglected so foolishly in early life.

It may be said, without vanity, that I was an apt pupil, and in the course of half a dozen lessons I had arrived at very considerable agility in the waltzing line, and could twirl round the room with him at such a pace as made the old gentleman pant again, and hardly left him breath enough to puff out a compliment to his pupil. I may say, that in a single week I became an expert waltzer ; but as I wished when I came out publicly in that character, to be quite sure of myself, and as I had hitherto practised not with a lady, but with a very fat old man, it was agreed that he should bring a lady of his acquaintance to perfect me, and accordingly, at my eighth lesson, Madame Springbock herself came to the dancing-room, and the old Zephyr performed on the violin.

If any man ventures the least sneer with regard to this lady, or dares to insinuate anything disrespectful to her or myself, I say at once, that he is an impudent calumniator. Madame Springbock is old enough to be my grandmother, and as ugly a woman as I ever saw ; but though old, she was *passionnée pour la danse*, and not having (on account, doubtless, of her age and unprepossessing appearance) many opportunities of indulging in her favourite pastime, made up for lost time by immense activity whenever she could get a partner. In vain, at the end of the hour, would Springbock exclaim, 'Amalia, my soul's blessing, the time is up !' 'Play on, dear Alphonso !' would the old lady exclaim, whisking me round : and though I had not the least pleasure in such a homely partner, yet for the sake of perfecting myself, I waltzed and waltzed with her, until we were both half dead with fatigue.

At the end of three weeks I could waltz as well as any man in Germany.

At the end of four weeks there was a grand ball at court in honour of H.H. the Prince of Dummerland and his princess, and *then* I determined I would come out in public. I dressed myself with unusual care and splendour. My hair was curled and my moustache dyed to a nicety ; and of the four hundred gentlemen present, if the girls of

Kalbsbraten *did* select one who wore an English hussar uniform, why should I disguise the fact? In spite of my silence, the news had somehow got abroad, as news will in such small towns,—Herr von Fitz-Boodle was coming out in a waltz that evening. His highness the duke even made an allusion to the circumstance. When on this eventful night, I went, as usual, and made him my bow in the presentation, '*Vous, Monsieur,*' said he, '*vous qui êtes si jeune, devez aimer la danse.*' I blushed as red as my trousers, and bowing, went away.

I stepped up to Dorothea. Heavens! how beautiful she looked! and how archly she smiled, as, with a thumping heart, I asked her hand for a waltz! She took out her little mother-of-pearl dancing-book—she wrote down my name with her pencil—we were engaged for the fourth waltz, and till then I left her to other partners.

Who says that his first waltz is not a nervous moment? I vow I was more excited than by any duel I ever fought. I would not dance any contre-danse or galop. I repeatedly went to the buffet and got glasses of punch (dear simple Germany! 'tis with rum-punch and egg-flip thy children strengthen themselves for the dance!)—I went into the ball-room and looked—the couples bounded before me, the music clashed and rang in my ears—all was fiery, feverish, indistinct. The gleaming white columns, the polished oaken floors in which the innumerable tapers were reflected—all together swam before my eyes, and I was in a pitch of madness almost when the fourth waltz at length came. '*Will you dance with your sword on?*' said the sweetest voice in the world. I blushed, and stammered, and trembled, as I laid down that weapon and my cap, and hark! the music began!

Oh, how my hand trembled as I placed it round the waist of Dorothea! With my left hand I took her right—did she squeeze it? I think she did—to this day I think she did. Away we went; we tripped over the polished oak floor like two young fairies. '*Courage, monsieur,*' said she, with her sweet smile; then it was, '*Très bien, monsieur*'; then I heard the voices humming and buzzing about. '*Il danse bien, l'Anglais*'; '*Ma foi, oui,*' says another. On we went, twirling and twisting, and turning and whirling; couple after couple dropped panting off. Little Klingenspohr himself was obliged to give in. All

eyes were upon us—we were going round *alone*. Dorothea was almost exhausted, when——

I have been sitting for two hours since I marked the asterisks, thinking—thinking. I have committed crimes in my life—who hasn't? But talk of remorse, what remorse is there like *that* which rushes up in a flood to my brain sometimes when I am alone, and causes me to blush when I'm abed in the dark?

I fell, sir, on that infernal slippery floor. Down we came like shot; we rolled over and over in the midst of the ball-room, the music going ten miles an hour, 800 pair of eyes fixed upon us, a cursed shriek of laughter bursting out from all sides. Heavens! how clear I heard it, as we went on rolling and rolling! 'My child! my Dorothea!' shrieked out Madame Speck, rushing forward, and as soon as she had breath to do so, Dorothea of course screamed too, then she fainted, then she was disentangled from out my spurs, and borne off by a bevy of tittering women. 'Clumsy brute!' said Madame Speck, turning her fat back upon me. I remained upon my *séant*, wild, ghastly, looking about. It was all up with me—I knew it was. I wished I could have died there, and I wish so still.

Klingenspoehr married her, that is the long and short; but before that event I placed a sabre-cut across the young scoundrel's nose, which destroyed *his* beauty for ever.

O Dorothea! you can't forgive me—you oughtn't to forgive me; but I love you madly still.

My next flame was Ottilia; but let us keep her for another number; my feelings overpower me at present.

G. F. B.

OTILIA

[*Fraser's Magazine*, February, 1843.]

CHAPTER I

THE ALBUM—THE MEDITERRANEAN HEATH

TRAVELLING some little time back in a wild part of Connemara, where I had been for fishing and seal-shooting, I had the good luck to get admission to the château of an hospitable Irish gentleman, and to procure some news of my once dear Otilia.

Yes, of no other than Otilia v. Schlippenschlopp, the Muse of Kalbsbraten-Pumpernickel, the friendly little town far away in Sachsenland,—where old Speck built the town-pump, where Klingenspoehr was slashed across the nose,—where Dorothea rolled over and over in that horrible waltz with Fitz-Boo—. Psha!—away with the recollection: but wasn't it strange to get news of Otilia in the wildest corner of Ireland, where I never should have thought to hear her gentle name? Walking on that very Urrisbeg Mountain under whose shadow I heard Otilia's name, Mackay, the learned author of the *Flora Patlandica*, discovered the Mediterranean heath,—such a flower as I have often plucked on the sides of Vesuvius, and as Proserpine, no doubt, amused herself in gathering as she strayed in the fields of Enna. Here it is—the self-same flower, peering out at the Atlantic from Roundstone Bay; here, too, in this wild lonely place, nestles the fragrant memory of my Otilia!

In a word, after a day on Ballylynch lake (where, with a brown fly and a single hair, I killed fourteen salmon, the smallest twenty-nine pounds' weight, the largest somewhere about five stone ten), my young friend Blake Bodkin Lynch Browne (a fine lad who has made his Continental tour) and I adjourned after dinner to the young gentleman's private

room, for the purpose of smoking a certain cigar, which is never more pleasant than after a hard day's sport, or a day spent indoors, or after a good dinner, or a bad one, or at night when you are tired, or in the morning when you are fresh, or of a cold winter's day, or of a scorching summer's afternoon, or at any other moment you choose to fix upon.

What should I see in Blake's room but a rack of pipes, such as are to be found in almost all the bachelors' rooms in Germany, and amongst them was a porcelain pipe-head bearing the image of the Kalbsbraten pump! There it was, the old spout, the old familiar allegory of Mars, Bacchus, Apollo virorum, and the rest, that I had so often looked at from Hof-Architekt Speck's window, as I sat there by the side of Dorothea. The old gentleman had given me one of these very pipes, for he had hundreds of them painted, wherewith he used to gratify almost every stranger who came into his native town.

Any old place with which I have once been familiar (as, perhaps, I have before stated in these *Confessions*—but never mind that) is in some sort dear to me: and were I Lord Shootingcastle or Colonel Popland, I think after a residence of six months there I should love the Fleet Prison. As I saw the old familiar pipe, I took it down, and crammed it with Cavendish tobacco, and lay down on a sofa, and puffed away for an hour wellnigh, thinking of old, old times.

'You're very entertaining to-night, Fitz,' says young Blake, who had made several tumblers of punch for me, which I had gulped down without saying a word. 'Don't ye think ye'd be more easy in bed than snorting and sighing there on my sofa, and groaning fit to make me go hang myself?'

'I am thinking, Blake,' says I, 'about Pumpernickel, where old Speck gave you this pipe.'

'Deed he did,' replies the young man; 'and did ye know the old Bar'n?'

'I did,' said I. 'My friend, I have been by the banks of the Bendemeer. Tell me, are the nightingales still singing there, and do the roses still bloom?'

'The *hwat*?' cries Blake; 'what the divvle, Fitz, are you growling about? Bendemeer Lake's in Westmoreland, as I preshume; and as for roses and nightingales, I give ye my word it's Greek ye're talking to me.' And Greek it

very possibly was, for my young friend, though as good across country as any man in his county, has not that fine feeling and tender perception of beauty which may be found elsewhere, dear madam.

‘Tell me about Speck, Blake, and Kalbsbraten, and Dorothea, and Klingenspoehr her husband.’

‘He with the cut across the nose, is it?’ cried Blake; ‘I know him well, and his old wife.’

‘His old what, sir?’ cried Fitz-Boodle, jumping up from his seat; ‘Klingenspoehr’s wife old?—Is he married again?—Is Dorothea then d-d-dead?’

‘Dead!—no more dead than you are, only I take her to be five-and-thirty; and when a woman has had nine children, you know, she looks none the younger; and I can tell ye; that when she trod on my corrums at a ball at the Grand Juke’s, I felt something heavier than a feather on my foot.’

‘Madame de Klingenspoehr, then,’ replied I, hesitating somewhat, ‘has grown rather—rather st-st-out?’ I could hardly get out the *out*, and trembled I don’t know why as I asked the question.

‘Stout, begad!—she weighs fourteen stone, saddle and bridle.—That’s right, down goes my pipe; flop! crash falls the tumbler into the fender! Break away, my boy, and remember, whoever breaks a glass here pays a dozen.’

The fact was, that the announcement of Dorothea’s changed condition caused no small disturbance within me, and I expressed it in the abrupt manner mentioned by young Blake.

Roused thus from my reverie, I questioned the young fellow about his residence at Kalbsbraten, which has been always since the war a favourite place for our young gentry, and heard with some satisfaction that Potzdorff was married to the Behrenstein, Haarbart had left the dragoons, the Crown Prince had broken with the —; but mum! of what interest are all these details to the reader, who has never been at friendly little Kalbsbraten?

Presently Lynch reaches me down one of the three books that formed his library (the *Racing Calendar* and a book of fishing-flies making up the remainder of the set). ‘And there’s my album,’ says he; ‘you’ll find plenty of hands in it that you’ll recognize, as you are an old Pumpernickelaner.’ And so I did, in truth: it was a little book

after the fashion of German albums, in which good simple little ledger every friend or acquaintance of the owner inscribes a poem or stanza from some favourite poet or philosopher with the transcriber's own name, as thus :—

To the true house-friend, and beloved
 Irelandish youth :
 ‘Sera nunquam est ad bonos mores ira :’
 WACKERBART,
 Professor at the Grand-Ducal Kalbs-
 braten-Pumpnickelisch Gymnasium.

Another writes :—

Wander on roses and forget-me-not.
 Amalia v. Nachtmütze.
 Geb. v. Schlafrock.

With a flourish, and the picture mayhap of a rose. Let the reader imagine some hundreds of these interesting inscriptions, and he will have an idea of the book.

Turning over the leaves I came presently on *Dorothea's* hand. There it was, the little, neat, pretty handwriting, the dear old up-and-down-strokes that I had not looked at for many a long year,—the Mediterranean heath, which grew on the sunniest banks of Fitz-Boodle's existence, and here found, dear, dear little sprig ! in rude Galwagian bog-lands.

‘Look at the other side of the page,’ says Lynch rather sarcastically (for I don't care to confess that I kissed the name of ‘Dorothea v. Klingenspohr, born v. Speck’ written under an extremely feeble passage of verse). ‘Look at the other side of the paper !’

I did, and what do you think I saw ?

I saw the writing of five of the little Klingenspohrs, who have all sprung up since my time.

‘Ha ! ha ! haw !’ screamed the impertinent young Irishman, and the story was all over Connemara and Joyce's country in a day after.

CHAPTER II

OTILIA IN PARTICULAR

SOME kind critic who peruses these writings will, doubtless, have the goodness to point out that the simile of the Mediterranean heath is applied to two personages in this chapter—to Otilia and Dorothea, and say, Psha ! the fellow is but a poor unimaginative creature not to be able to find a simile apiece at least for the girls ; how much better would *we* have done the business !

Well, it is a very pretty simile ;—the girls were rivals, were beautiful, I loved them both,—which should have the sprig of heath ? Mr. Cruikshank (who has taken to serious painting) is getting ready for the Exhibition a fine piece, representing Fitz-Boodle on the Urrisbeg Mountain, County Galway, Ireland, with a sprig of heath in his hand, hesitating, like Paris, on which of the beauties he should bestow it. In the background is a certain animal between two bundles of hay, but that I take to represent the critics puzzled to which of my young beauties to assign the choice.

If Dorothea had been as rich as Miss Coutts, and had come to me the next day after the accident at the ball, and said, ‘ George, will you marry me ? ’ it must not be supposed I would have done any such thing. *That* dream had vanished for ever ; rage and pride took the place of love ; and the only chance I had of recovering from my dreadful discomfiture was by bearing it bravely, and trying, if possible, to awaken a little compassion in my favour. I limped home (arranging my scheme with great presence of mind as I actually sat spinning there on the ground), I limped home, sent for Pflastersticken, the court-surgeon, and addressed him to the following effect : ‘ Pflastersticken,’ says I, ‘ there has been an accident at court of which you will hear. You will send in leeches, pills, and the deuce knows what, and you will say that I have dislocated my leg : for some days you will state that I am in considerable danger ; and you are a good fellow and a man of courage I know, for which very reason, you can appreciate those

qualities in another ; so mind, if you breathe a word of my secret, either you or I must lose a life.'

Away went the surgeon, and the next day all Kalbsbraten knew that I was on the point of death : I had been delirious all night, had had eighty leeches, besides I don't know how much medicine ; but the Kalbsbrateners knew to a scruple. Whenever anybody was ill, this little kind society knew what medicines were prescribed, everybody in the town knew what everybody had for her dinner. If Madame Rumpel had her satin dyed ever so quietly, the whole society was on the *qui vive* ; if Countess Pultuski sent to Berlin for a new set of teeth, not a person in Kalbsbraten but was ready to compliment her as she put them on ; if Potzdorff paid his tailor's bill, or Muffinstein bought a piece of black wax for his moustachios, it was the talk of the little city : and so, of course, was my accident. In their sorrow for my misfortune, Dorothea's was quite forgotten, and those eighty leeches saved me. I became interesting ; I had cards left at my door ; and I kept my room for a fortnight, during which time I read every one of M. Kotzebue's plays.

At the end of that period I was convalescent, though still a little lame. I called at old Speck's house and apologized for my clumsiness, with the most admirable coolness ; I appeared at court, and stated calmly that I did not intend to dance any more ; and when Klingenspoehr grinned, I told that young gentleman such a piece of my mind as led to his wearing a large sticking-plaster patch on his nose, which was split as neatly down the middle as you would split an orange at dessert. In a word, what man could do to repair my defeat, I did.

There is but one thing now of which I am ashamed—of those killing epigrams which I wrote (*Mon Dieu !* must I own it ?—but even the fury of my anger proves the extent of my love !) against the Speck family. They were handed about in confidence at court, and made a frightful sensation.

Is it possible ?

There happened at Schloss P—mp—rn—ckel,
A strange mishap our sides to tickle,
And set the people in a roar ;—
A strange caprice of Fortune fickle :
I never thought at Pumpnickel
To see a SPECK upon the floor !

La Perfide Albion ; or, a Caution to Waltzers.

'Come to the dance,' the Briton said,
And forward D-r-th-a led,
Fair, fresh, and three-and-twenty !
Ah, girls, beware of Britons red !
What wonder that it turned *her head* ?

SAT VERBUM SAPIENTI.

Reasons for not Marrying.

'The lovely Miss S.
Will surely say "Yes,"
You've only to ask and try.'
'That subject we'll quit,'
Says Georgy the wit,
'I've a much better SPEC in my eye !'

This last epigram especially was voted so killing that it flew like wildfire ; and I know for a fact that our Chargé-d'affaires at Kalbsbraten sent a courier express with it to the Foreign Office in England, whence, through our amiable Foreign Secretary, Lord P-lm-rston, it made its way into every fashionable circle : nay, I have reason to believe caused a smile on the cheek of R-y-lty itself. Now that Time has taken away the sting of these epigrams, there can be no harm in giving them ; and 'twas well enough then to endeavour to hide under the lash of wit the bitter pangs of humiliation ; but my heart bleeds now to think that I should have ever brought a tear on the gentle cheek of Dorothea.

Not content with this, with humiliating her by satire, and with wounding her accepted lover across the nose, I determined to carry my revenge still further, and to fall in love with anybody else. This person was Ottilia v. Schlippenschlopp.

Otho Sigismund Freiherr von Schlippenschlopp, Knight Grand Cross of the Ducal Order of the Two-Necked Swan of Pumpnickel, of the Porc-et-Sifflet of Kalbsbraten, Commander of the George and Blue Boar of Dummerland, Excellency, and High Chancellor of the United Duchies, lived in the second floor of a house in the Schwapsgasse, where, with his private income and his revenues as chancellor, amounting together to some 300*l.* per annum, he maintained such a state as very few other officers of the Grand-Ducal Crown could exhibit. The Baron is married to Maria Antoinetta, a countess of the house of Kartoffel-

stadt, branches of which have taken root all over Germany. He has no sons, and but one daughter, the Fräulein OTTILIA.

The chancellor is a worthy old gentleman, too fat and wheezy to preside at the privy council, fond of his pipe, his ease, and his rubber. His lady is a very tall and pale Roman-nosed countess, who looks as gentle as Mrs. Robert Roy, where, in the novel, she is for putting Bailie Nicol Jarvie into the lake, and who keeps the honest chancellor in the greatest order. The Fräulein Ottilia had not arrived at Kalbsbraten when the little affair between me and Dorothea was going on, or rather had only just come in for the conclusion of it, being presented for the first time that year at the ball where I—where I met with my accident.

At the time when the countess was young, it was not the fashion in her country to educate the young ladies so highly as since they have been educated ; and provided they could waltz, sew, and make puddings, they were thought to be decently bred ; being seldom called upon for algebra or Sanskrit in the discharge of the honest duties of their lives. But Fräulein Ottilia was of the modern school in this respect, and came back from her *pension* at Strasburg speaking all the languages, dabbling in all the sciences, an historian, a poet,—a blue of the ultramarine sort, in a word. What a difference there was, for instance, between poor, simple Dorothea's love of novel-reading, and the profound encyclopaedic learning of Ottilia !

Before the latter arrived from Strasburg (where she had been under the care of her aunt the Canoness Countess Ottilia of Kartoffelstadt, to whom I here beg to offer my humblest respects), Dorothea had passed for a *bel esprit* in the little court circle, and her little simple stock of accomplishments had amused us all very well. She used to sing 'Herz, mein Herz' and 'T'en souviens-tu' in a decent manner (*once*, before Heaven, I thought her singing better than Grisi's), and then she had a little album in which she drew flowers, and used to embroider slippers wonderfully, and was very merry at a game of loto or forfeits, and had a hundred small *agréments de société* which rendered her an acceptable member of it.

But when Ottilia arrived, poor Dolly's reputation was crushed in a month. The former wrote poems both in French and German ; she painted landscapes and portraits in real oil ; and she twanged off a rattling piece of Liszt or

Kalkbrenner in such a brilliant way, that Dora scarcely dared to touch the instrument after her, or venture, after Ottilia had trilled and gurgled through 'Una Voce,' or 'Di Piacer' (Rossini was in fashion then), to lift up her little modest pipe in a ballad. What was the use of the poor thing going to sit in the park, where so many of the young officers used ever to gather round her? Whirr! Ottilia went by galloping on a chestnut mare with a groom after her, and presently all the young fellows who could buy or hire horse-flesh were prancing in her train.

When they met, Ottilia would bounce towards her soul's darling, and put her hands round her waist, and call her by a thousand affectionate names, and then talk of her as only ladies or authors can talk of one another,—talk of her, in a word, as Mr. Samuel Warren does of his 'dear Boz,' in the December number of *Blackwood's Magazine*. How tenderly she would hint at Dora's little imperfections of education!—how cleverly she would insinuate that the poor girl had no wit! and, thank God, no more she had. The fact is, that do what I will I see I'm in love with her still, and would be if she had fifty children; but my passion blinded me *then*, and every arrow that fiery Ottilia discharged I marked with savage joy. Dolly, thank Heaven, didn't mind the wit much; she was too simple for that. But still the recurrence of it would leave in her heart a vague, indefinite feeling of pain, and somehow she began to understand that her empire was passing away, and that her dear friend hated her like poison; and so she married Klingenspoehr. I have written myself almost into a reconciliation with the silly fellow, for the truth is, he has been a good, honest husband to her, and she has children, and makes puddings, and is happy.

Ottilia was pale and delicate. She wore her glistening black hair in bands, and dressed in vapoury white muslin. She sang her own words to her harp, and they commonly insinuated that she was alone in the world,—that she suffered some inexpressible and mysterious heart-pangs, the lot of all finer geniuses,—that though she lived and moved in the world she was not of it,—that she was of a consumptive tendency and might look for a premature interment. She even had fixed on the spot where she should lie: the violets grew there, she said, the river went moaning by; the grey willow whispered sadly over her head, and

her heart pined to be at rest. 'Mother,' she would say, turning to her parent, 'promise me—promise me to lay me in that spot when the parting hour has come!' At which Madame de Schlippenschlopp would shriek and grasp her in her arms, and at which, I confess, I would myself blubber like a child. She had six darling friends at school, and every courier from Kalbsbraten carried off wholereams of her letter-paper.

In Kalbsbraten, as in every other German town, there are a vast number of literary characters, of whom our young friend quickly became the chief. They set up a literary journal, which appeared once a week, upon light blue or primrose paper, and which, in compliment to the lovely Ottilia's maternal name, was called the *Kartoffelnkranz*. Here are a couple of her ballads extracted from the *Kranz*, and by far the most cheerful specimen of her style. For in her songs she never would willingly let off the heroines without a suicide or a consumption. She never would hear of such a thing as a happy marriage, and had an appetite for grief quite amazing in so young a person. As for her dying and desiring to be buried under the willow-tree, which is the subject of the first ballad, though I believed the story then, I have at present some doubts about it. For, since the publication of my memoirs, I have been thrown much into the society of literary persons (who admire my style hugely), and, egad! though some of them are dismal enough in their works, I find them in their persons the least sentimental class that ever a gentleman fell in with.

THE WILLOW-TREE

Know ye the willow-tree
 Whose grey leaves quiver,
 Whispering gloomily
 To yon pale river?
 Lady, at even-tide
 Wander not near it,
 They say its branches hide
 A sad, lost spirit!

Once to the willow-tree
 A maid came fearful,
 Pale seemed her cheek to be,
 Her blue eye tearful;

Soon as she saw the tree,
 Her step moved fleeter,
 No one was there—ah, me !
 No one to meet her !
 Quick beat her heart to hear
 The far bells' chime
 Toll from the chapel-tower
 The trysting time :
 But the red sun went down
 In golden flame,
 And though she looked round,
 Yet no one came !

Presently came the night,
 Sadly to greet her,—
 Moon in her silver light,
 Stars in their glitter ;
 Then sank the moon away
 Under the billow,
 Still wept the maid alone—
 There by the willow !

Through the long darkness,
 By the stream rolling,
 Hour after hour went on
 Tolling and tolling.
 Long was the darkness,
 Lonely and stilly ;
 Shrill came the night-wind,
 Piercing and chilly.

Shrill blew the morning breeze,
 Biting and cold,
 Bleak peers the grey dawn
 Over the wold.
 Bleak over moor and stream
 Looks the grey dawn,
 Grey, with dishevelled hair,
 Still stands the willow there—
 THE MAID IS GONE !

*Domine, Domine !
 Sing we a litany,—
 Sing for poor maiden-hearts broken and weary ;
 Domine, Domine !
 Sing we a litany,
 Wail we and weep we a wild Miserere !*

One of the chief beauties of this ballad (for the translation of which I received some well-merited compliments) is the delicate way in which the suicide of the poor young woman

under the willow-tree is hinted at ; for that she threw herself into the water and became one among the lilies of the stream, is as clear as a pikestaff. Her suicide is committed some time in the darkness, when the slow hours move on tolling and tolling, and is hinted at darkly as befits the time and the deed.

But that unromantic brute Van Cutsem, the Dutch *Chargé d'affaires*, sent in to the *Kartoffelnkranz* of the week after a conclusion of the ballad, which shows what a poor creature he must be. His pretext for writing it was, he said, because he could not bear such melancholy endings to poems and young women, and therefore he submitted the following lines :—

I

Long by the willow-trees
 Vainly they sought her.
 Wild rang the mother's screams
 O'er the grey water :
 ' Where is my lovely one ?
 Where is my daughter ?

II

' Rouse thee, sir constable—
 Rouse thee and look ;
 Fisherman, bring your net,
 Boatman, your hook.
 Beat in the lily-beds,
 Dive in the brook ! '

III

Vainly the constable
 Shouted and called her ;
 Vainly the fisherman
 Beat the green alder,
 Vainly he flung the net,
 Never it hauled her !

IV

Mother, beside the fire
 Sat, her nightcap in ;
 Father, in easy chair,
 Gloomily napping,
 When at the window-sill
 Came a light tapping !

V

And a pale countenance
 Looked through the casement.
 Loud beat the mother's heart,
 Sick with amazement,
 And at the vision, which
 Came to surprise her,
 Shrieked in an agony,—
 'Lor'! it's Elizar!'

VI

Yes, 'twas Elizabeth—
 Yes, 'twas their girl;
 Pale was her cheek, and her
 Hair out of curl.
 'Mother!' the loving one,
 Blushing, exclaimed,
 'Let not your innocent
 Lizzy be blamed.'

VII

'Yesterday, going to aunt
 Jones's to tea,
 Mother, dear mother, I
Forgot the door-key!
 And as the night was cold,
 And the way steep,
 Mrs. Jones kept me to
 Breakfast and sleep.'

VIII

Whether her pa and ma
 Fully believed her,
 That we shall never know,
 Stern they received her;
 And for the work of that
 Cruel, though short, night,
 Sent her to bed without
 Tea for a fortnight.

IX

MORAL

*Hey diddle diddlety,
 Cat and the Fiddlety!
 Maidens of England, take caution by she!
 Let love and suicide
 Never tempt you aside.
 And always remember to take the door-key!*

Some people laughed at this parody, and even preferred it to the original ; but for myself I have no patience with the individual who can turn the finest sentiments of our nature into ridicule, and make everything sacred a subject of scorn. The next ballad is less gloomy than that of the willow-tree, and in it the lovely writer expresses her longing for what has charmed us all, and, as it were, squeezes the whole spirit of the fairy-tale into a few stanzas :—

FAIRY DAYS

Beside the old hall-fire—upon my nurse's knee,
Of happy fairy days—what tales were told to me !
I thought the world was once—all peopled with princesses,
And my heart would beat to hear—their loves and their distresses ;
And many a quiet night,—in slumber sweet and deep,
The pretty fairy people—would visit me in sleep.

I saw them in my dreams—come flying east and west,
With wondrous fairy gifts—the new-born babe they bless'd ;
One has brought a jewel—and one a crown of gold,
And one has brought a curse—but she is wrinkled and old.
The gentle queen turns pale—to hear those words of sin,
But the king he only laughs—and bids the dance begin.

The babe has grown to be—the fairest of the land,
And rides the forest green—a hawk upon her hand,
An amb'ling palfrey white—a golden robe and crown ;
I've seen her in my dreams—riding up and down ;
And heard the ogre laugh—as she fell into his snare,
At the little tender creature—who wept and tore her hair !

But ever when it seemed—her need was at the sorest,
A prince in shining mail—comes prancing through the forest,
A waving ostrich-plume—a buckler burnished bright ;
I've seen him in my dreams—good sooth ! a gallant knight.
His lips are coral red—beneath a dark moustache ;
See how he waves his hand—and how his blue eyes flash !

' Come forth, thou Paynim knight ! '—he shouts in accents clear.
The giant and the maid—both tremble his voice to hear.
Saint Mary guard him well !—he draws his falchion keen,
The giant and the knight—are fighting on the green.
I see them in my dreams—his blade gives stroke on stroke,
The giant pants and reels—and tumbles like an oak !

With what a blushing grace—he falls upon his knee
And takes the lady's hand—and whispers ' You are free ! '
Ah ! happy childish tales—of knight and faërie !
I waken from my dreams—but there's ne'er a knight for me ;
I waken from my dreams—and wish that I could be
A child by the old hall-fire—upon my nurse's knee !

Indeed, Ottilia looked like a fairy herself : pale, small, slim, and airy. You could not see her face, as it were, for her eyes, which were so wild, and so tender, and shone so that they would have dazzled an eagle, much more a poor goose of a Fitz-Boodle. In the theatre, when she sat on the opposite side of the house, those big eyes used to pursue me as I sat pretending to listen to the *Zauberflöte*, or to Don Carlos, or Egmont, and at the tender passages, especially, they would have such a winning, weeping, imploring look with them as flesh and blood could not bear.

Shall I tell how I became a poet for the dear girl's sake ? 'Tis surely unnecessary after the reader has perused the above versions of her poems. Shall I tell what wild follies I committed in prose as well as in verse ? how I used to watch under her window of icy evenings, and with chilblainy fingers sing serenades to her on the guitar ? Shall I tell how, in a sledging party, I had the happiness to drive her, and of the delightful privilege which is, on these occasions, accorded to the driver ?

Any reader who has spent a winter in Germany perhaps knows it. A large party of a score or more of sledges is formed. Away they go to some pleasure-house that has been previously fixed upon, where a ball and collation are prepared, and where each man, as his partner descends, has the delicious privilege of saluting her. O heavens and earth ! I may grow to be a thousand years old, but I can never forget the rapture of that salute.

'The keen air has given me an appetite,' said the dear angel as we entered the supper-room ; and to say the truth, fairy as she was, she made a remarkably good meal—consuming a couple of basins of white-soup, several kinds of German sausages, some Westphalia ham, some white puddings, an anchovy salad made with cornichons and onions, sweets innumerable, and a considerable quantity of old Stein Wein and rum-punch afterwards. Then she got up and danced as brisk as a fairy, in which operation I of course did not follow her, but had the honour at the close of the evening's amusement once more to have her by my side in the sledge, as we swept in the moonlight over the snow.

Kalbsbraten is a very hospitable place as far as tea-parties are concerned, but I never was in one where dinners were so scarce. At the palace they occurred twice or thrice in a month, but on these occasions spinsters were not invited,

and I seldom had the opportunity of seeing my Ottilia except at evening parties.

Nor are these, if the truth must be told, very much to my taste. Dancing I have forsworn, whist is too severe a study for me, and I do not like to play *écarté* with old ladies, who are sure to cheat you in the course of an evening's play.

But to have an occasional glance at Ottilia was enough ; and many and many a napoleon did I lose to her mamma, Madame de Schlippenschlopp, for the blest privilege of looking at her daughter. Many is the tea-party I went to, shivering into cold clothes after dinner (which is my abomination) in order to have one little look at the lady of my soul.

At these parties there were generally refreshments of a nature more substantial than mere tea—punch, both milk and rum, hot wine, *consommé*, and a peculiar and exceedingly disagreeable sandwich made of a mixture of cold white puddings and garlic, of which I have forgotten the name, and always detested the savour.

Gradually a conviction came upon me that Ottilia ate a great deal.

I do not dislike to see a woman eat comfortably. I even think that an agreeable woman ought to be *fraude*, and should love certain little dishes and knick-knacks. I know that though at dinner they commonly take nothing, they have had roast mutton with the children at two, and laugh at their pretensions to starvation.

No ! a woman who eats a grain of rice, like Amina in *The Arabian Nights*, is absurd and unnatural ; but there is a *modus in rebus* : there is no reason why she should be a ghoul, a monster, an ogress, a horrid gormandizeress—faugh !

It was, then, with a rage amounting almost to agony, that I found Ottilia ate too much at every meal. She was always eating, and always eating too much. If I went there in the morning, there was the horrid familiar odour of those oniony sandwiches ; if in the afternoon, dinner had been just removed, and I was choked by reeking reminiscences of roast meat. Tea we have spoken of. She gobbled up more cakes than any six people present ; then came the supper and the sandwiches again, and the egg-flip and the horrible rum-punch.

She was as thin as ever—paler if possible than ever ;—but, by Heavens ! *her nose began to grow red !*

Mon Dieu ! how I used to watch and watch it ! Some days it was purple, some days had more of the vermillion—I could take an affidavit that after a heavy night's supper it was more swollen, more red than before.

I recollect one night when we were playing a round game (I had been looking at her nose very eagerly and sadly for some time), she of herself brought up the conversation about eating, and confessed that she had five meals a day.

'*That accounts for it !*' says I, flinging down the cards, and springing up and rushing like a madman out of the room. I rushed away into the night, and wrestled with my passion. 'What ! marry,' said I, 'a woman who eats meat twenty-one times in a week, besides breakfast and tea ? Marry a sarcophagus, a cannibal, a butcher's shop ?—Away !' I strove and strove, I drank, I groaned, I wrestled and fought with my love—but it overcame me ; one look of those eyes brought me to her feet again. I yielded myself up like a slave ; I fawned and whined for her ; I thought her nose was not so *very* red.

Things came to this pitch that I sounded His Highness's minister to know whether he would give me service in the Duchy ; I thought of purchasing an estate there. I was given to understand that I should get a chamberlain's key and some post of honour did I choose to remain, and I even wrote home to my brother Fitz in England, hinting a change in my condition.

At this juncture the town of Hamburg sent His Highness the Grand Duke (à propos of a commercial union which was pending between the two states) a singular present, no less than a certain number of barrels of oysters, which are considered extreme luxuries in Germany, especially in the inland parts of the country, where they are almost unknown.

In honour of the oysters and the new commercial treaty (which arrived in *fourgons* dispatched for the purpose), His Highness announced a grand supper and ball, and invited all the quality of all the principalities round about. It was a splendid affair, the grand saloon brilliant with hundreds of uniforms and brilliant toilettes—not the least beautiful among them, I need not say, was Ottilia.

At midnight the supper-rooms were thrown open, and we

formed into little parties of six, each having a table, nobly served with plate, a lackey in attendance, and a gratifying ice-pail or two of champagne to *égayer* the supper. It was no small cost to serve five hundred people on silver, and the repast was certainly a princely and magnificent one.

I had, of course, arranged with Mademoiselle de Schlippen-schlopp. Captains Frumpel and Fridelberger of the Duke's Guard, Mesdames de Butterbrod and Bopp, formed our little party.

The first course, of course, consisted of *the oysters*. Ottilia's eyes gleamed with double brilliancy as the lackey opened them; there were nine apiece for us—how well I recollect the number!

I never was much of an oyster-eater, nor can I relish them *in naturalibus* as some do, but require a quantity of sauces, lemons, cayenne peppers, bread-and-butter, and so forth, to render them palatable.

By the time I had made my preparations, Ottilia, the captains, and the two ladies had wellnigh finished theirs. Indeed Ottilia had gobbled up all hers, and there were only my nine left in the dish.

I took one—IT WAS BAD. The scent of it was enough—they were all bad. Ottilia had eaten nine bad oysters.

I put down the horrid shell. Her eyes glistened more and more; she could not take them off the tray.

'Dear Herr George,' she said, '*will you give me your oysters?*'

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She had them all down—before—I could say—Jack—Robinson.

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I left Kalbsbraten that night, and have never been there since.

G. S. F.-B.

MEN'S WIVES

BY G. FITZ-BOODLE

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MEN'S WIVES

By G. FITZ-BOODLE

I

MR. AND MRS. FRANK BERRY

[*Fraser's Magazine*, March, 1843.]

CHAPTER I

THE FIGHT AT SLAUGHTER HOUSE

I AM very fond of reading about battles, and have most of Marlborough's and Wellington's at my fingers' ends, but the most tremendous combat I ever saw, and one that interests me to think of more than Malplaquet or Waterloo (which, by the way, has grown to be a downright nuisance, so much do men talk of it after dinner, prating most disgustingly about 'the Prussians coming up,' and what not), I say the most tremendous combat ever known was that between Berry and Biggs, the gown-boy, which commenced in a certain place called Middle Briars, which is situated in the midst of the cloisters that run along the side of the playground of Slaughter House School, near Smithfield, London. It was there, madam, that your humble servant had the honour of acquiring, after six years' labour, that immense fund of classical knowledge which in after life has been so exceedingly useful to him.

The circumstances of the quarrel were these:—Biggs, the gown-boy (a man who, in those days, I thought was at least seven feet high, and was quite thunder-struck to find in after life that he measured no more than five feet four), was what we called 'second cock' of the school; the first cock was a great, big, good-humoured, lazy, fair-haired fellow, Old Hawkins by name, who, because he was large and good-humoured, hurt nobody. Biggs, on the contrary, was a sad bully; he had half a dozen fags, and beat them all unmercifully. Moreover, he had a little brother,

a boarder in Potky's house, whom, as a matter of course, he hated and maltreated worse than any one else.

Well, one day, because young Biggs had not brought his brother his hoops, or had not caught a ball at cricket, or for some other equally good reason, Biggs the elder so belaboured the poor little fellow, that Berry, who was sauntering by, and saw the dreadful blows which the elder brother was dealing to the younger with his hockey-stick, felt a compassion for the little fellow (perhaps he had a jealousy against Biggs, and wanted to try a few rounds with him, but that I can't vouch for); however, Berry passing by, stopped and said, 'Don't you think you have thrashed the boy enough, Biggs?' He spoke this in a very civil tone, for he never would have thought of interfering rudely with the sacred privilege that an upper boy at a public school always has of beating a junior, especially when they happen to be brothers.

The reply of Biggs, as might be expected, was to hit young Biggs with the hockey-stick twice as hard as before, until the little wretch howled with pain. 'I suppose it's no business of yours, Berry,' said Biggs, thumping away all the while, and laid on worse and worse.

Until Berry (and, indeed, little Biggs) could bear it no longer, and the former, bouncing forward, wrenched the stick out of old Biggs's hands, and sent it whirling out of the cloister window, to the great wonder of a crowd of us small boys, who were looking on. Little boys always like to see a little companion of their own soundly beaten.

'There!' said Berry, looking into Biggs' face, as much as to say, 'I've gone and done it;' and he added to the brother, 'Scud away, you little thief! I've saved you this time.'

'Stop, young Biggs!' roared out his brother after a pause; 'and I'll break every bone in your infernal, scoundrelly skin!'

Young Biggs looked at Berry, then at his brother, then came at his brother's order, as if back to be beaten again, but lost heart and ran away as fast as his little legs could carry him.

'I'll do for him another time,' said Biggs. 'Here, under boy, take my coat;' and we all began to gather round and formed a ring.

'We had better wait till after school, Biggs,' cried Berry,

quite cool, but looking a little pale. 'There are only five minutes now, and it will take you more than that to thrash me.'

Biggs upon this committed a great error: for he struck Berry slightly across the face with the back of his hand, saying, 'You are in a funk.' But this was a feeling which Frank Berry did not in the least entertain; for in reply to Biggs's back-hander, and as quick as thought, and with all his might and main—pong! he delivered a blow upon old Biggs's nose that made the claret spurt, and sent the second cock down to the ground as if he had been shot.

He was up again, however, in a minute, his face white and gashed with blood, his eyes glaring, a ghastly spectacle; and Berry, meanwhile, had taken his coat off, and by this time there were gathered in the cloisters, on all the windows, and upon each other's shoulders, one hundred and twenty young gentlemen at the very least, for the news had gone out through the playground of 'a fight between Berry and Biggs.'

But Berry was quite right in his remark about the propriety of deferring the business, for at this minute Mr. Chip, the second master, came down the cloisters going into school, and grinned in his queer way as he saw the state of Biggs' face. 'Holloa, Mr. Biggs,' said he, 'I suppose you have run against a finger-post.' That was the regular joke with us at school, and you may be sure we all laughed heartily, as we always did when Mr. Chip made a joke, or anything like a joke. 'You had better go to the pump, sir, and get yourself washed, and not let Dr. Buckle see you in that condition.' So saying, Mr. Chip disappeared to his duties in the under school, whither all we little boys followed him.

It was Wednesday, a half-holiday, as everybody knows, and boiled-beef day at Slaughter House. I was in the same boarding-house with Berry, and we all looked to see whether he ate a good dinner, just as one would examine a man who was going to be hanged. I recollected, in after life, in Germany, seeing a friend who was going to fight a duel, eat five larks for his breakfast, and thought I had seldom witnessed greater courage. Berry ate moderately of the boiled beef—*boiled child* we used to call it at school, in our elegant, jocular way; he knew a great deal better than to load his stomach upon the eve of such a contest as was going to take place.

Dinner was very soon over, and Mr. Chip, who had been all the while joking Berry, and pressing him to eat, called him up into his study, to the great disappointment of us all, for we thought he was going to prevent the fight; but no such thing. The Rev. Edward Chip took Berry into his study, and poured him out two glasses of port wine, which he made him take with a biscuit, and patted him on the back, and went off. I have no doubt he was longing, like all of us, to see the battle, but etiquette, you know, forbade.

When we went out into the green, Old Hawkins was there—the great Hawkins, the cock of the school. I have never seen the man since, but still think of him as of something awful, gigantic, mysterious; he who could thrash everybody, who could beat all the masters: how we longed for him to put in his hand and lick Buckle! He was a dull boy, not very high in the school, and had all his exercises written for him. Buckle knew this, but respected him, never called him up to read Greek plays; passed over all his blunders, which were many; let him go out of half-holidays into the town as he pleased; how should any man dare to stop him—the great, calm, magnanimous, silent Strength? They say he licked a Life-Guardsman; I wonder whether it was Shaw, who killed all those Frenchmen? no, it could not be Shaw, for he was dead *au champ d'honneur*; but he *would* have licked Shaw if he had been alive. A bargeman I know he licked, at Jack Randall's in Slaughter House Lane. Old Hawkins was too lazy to play at cricket; he sauntered all day in the sunshine about the green, accompanied by little Tippins, who was in the sixth form, laughed and joked at Hawkins eternally, and was the person who wrote all his exercises.

Instead of going into town this afternoon, Hawkins remained at Slaughter House, to see the great fight between the second and third cocks.

The different masters of the school kept boarding-houses (such as Potky's, Chip's, Wickens's, Pinney's and so on), and the playground, or 'green,' as it was called, although the only thing green about the place was the broken glass on the walls that separate Slaughter House from Wilderness Row and Goswell Street—(many a time have I seen Mr. Pickwick look out of his window in that

street, though we did not know him then)—the playground, or green, was common to all. But if any stray boy from Potky's was found, for instance, in, or entering into, Chip's house, the most dreadful tortures were practised upon him, as I can answer in my own case.

Fancy, then, our astonishment at seeing a little three-foot wretch, of the name of Wills, one of Hawkins's fags (they were both in Potky's), walk undismayed amongst us lions at Chip's house, as the 'rich and rare' young lady did in Ireland. We were going to set upon him and devour or otherwise maltreat him, when he cried out in a little, shrill, impertinent voice, '*Tell Berry I want him!*'

We all roared with laughter. Berry was in the sixth form, and Wills or any under boy would as soon have thought of 'wanting' him, as I should of wanting the Duke of Wellington.

Little Wills looked round in an imperious kind of way. 'Well,' says he, stamping his foot, 'do you hear? *Tell Berry that HAWKINS wants him!*'

As for resisting the law of Hawkins, you might as soon think of resisting immortal Jove. Berry and Tolmash, who was to be his bottle-holder, made their appearance immediately, and walked out into the green where Hawkins was waiting, and, with an irresistible audacity that only belonged to himself, in the face of nature and all the regulations of the place, was smoking a cigar. When Berry and Tolmash found him, the three began slowly pacing up and down in the sunshine, and we little boys watched them.

Hawkins moved his arms and hands every now and then, and was evidently laying down the law about boxing. We saw his fists darting out every now and then with mysterious swiftness, hitting one, two, quick as thought, as if in the face of an adversary; now his left hand went up, as if guarding his own head, now his immense right fist dreadfully flapped the air, as if punishing his imaginary opponent's miserable ribs. The conversation lasted for some ten minutes, about which time gown-boys' dinner was over, and we saw these youths in their black, horned-button jackets and knee-breeches, issuing from their door in the cloisters. There were no hoops, no cricket-bats, as usual on a half-holiday. Who would have thought of play in expectation of such tremendous sport as was in store for us?

Towering among the gown-boys, of whom he was the head and the tyrant, leaning upon Bushby's arm, and followed at a little distance by many curious, pale, awe-stricken boys, dressed in his black silk-stockings, which he always sported, and with a crimson bandanna tied round his waist, came BIGGS. His nose was swollen with the blow given before school, but his eyes flashed fire. He was laughing and sneering with Bushby, and evidently intended to make minced meat of Berry.

The betting began pretty freely : the bets were against poor Berry. Five to three were offered—in ginger-beer. I took six to four in raspberry open tarts. The upper boys carried the thing farther still : and I know for a fact, that Swang's book amounted to four pound three (but he hedged a good deal), and Tittery lost seventeen shillings in a single bet to Pitts, who took the odds.

As Biggs and his party arrived, I heard Hawkins say to Berry, 'For Heaven's sake, my boy, fib with your right, and *mind his left hand!*'

Middle Briars was voted to be too confined a space for the combat, and it was agreed that it should take place behind the under-school in the shade, whither we all went. Hawkins, with his immense silver hunting-watch, kept the time ; and water was brought from the pump close to Notley's the pastrycook's, who did not admire fist-cuffs at all on half-holidays, for the fights kept the boys away from his shop. Gutley was the only fellow in the school who remained faithful to him, and he sat on the counter—the great gormandizing brute!—eating tarts the whole day.

This famous fight, as every Slaughter House man knows, lasted for two hours and twenty-nine minutes, by Hawkins's immense watch. All this time the air resounded with cries of 'Go it, Berry!' 'Go it, Biggs!' 'Pitch into him!' 'Give it him!' and so on. Shall I describe the hundred and two rounds of the combat?—No!—It would occupy too much space, and the taste for such descriptions has passed away.¹

¹ As it is very probable that many fair readers may not approve of the extremely forcible language in which the combat is depicted, I beg them to skip it and pass on to the next chapter, and to remember that it has been modelled on the style of the very best writers of the sporting papers.

1st round. Both the combatants fresh, and in prime order. The weight and inches somewhat on the gown-boy's side. Berry goes gallantly in, and delivers a clinker on the gown-boy's jaw. Biggs makes play with his left. Berry down.

4th round. Claret drawn in profusion from the gown-boy's grog-shop. (He went down, and had his front tooth knocked out, but the blow cut Berry's knuckles a great deal.)

15th round. Chancery. Fibbing. Biggs makes dreadful work with his left. Break away. Rally. Biggs down. Betting still six to four on the gown-boy.

20th round. The men both dreadfully punished. Berry somewhat shy of his adversary's left hand.

29th to 42nd round. The Chipsite all this while breaks away from the gown-boy's left, and goes down on a knee. Six to four on the gown-boy, until the fortieth round, when the bets became equal.

102nd and last round. For half an hour the men had stood up to each other, but were almost too weary to strike. The gown-boy's face hardly to be recognized, swollen and streaming with blood. The Chipsite in a similar condition, and still more punished about his side from his enemy's left hand. Berry gives a blow at his adversary's face, and falls over him as he falls.

The gown-boy can't come up to time. And thus ended the great fight of Berry and Biggs.

And what, pray, has this horrid description of a battle and a parcel of schoolboys to do with *Men's Wives*?

What has it to do with *Men's Wives*?—A great deal more, madam, than you think for. Only read Chapter II, and you shall hear.

CHAPTER II

THE COMBAT AT VERSAILLES

I AFTERWARDS came to be Berry's fag, and, though beaten by him daily, he allowed, of course, no one else to lay a hand upon me, and I got no more thrashing than was good for me. Thus an intimacy grew up between us, and after he left Slaughter House and went into the dragoons, the honest fellow did not forget his old friend, but actually made his appearance one day in the playground in moustaches and a braided coat, and gave me a gold pencil-case and a couple of sovereigns. I blushed when I took them, but take them I did; and I think the thing I almost best recollect in my life, is the sight of Berry getting behind an immense bay cab-horse, which was held by a correct little groom, and was waiting near the school in Slaughter House Square. He proposed, too, to have me to Long's, where he was lodging for the time; but this invitation was refused on my behalf by Dr. Buckle, who said, and possibly with correctness, that I should get little good by spending my holiday with such a scapegrace.

Once afterwards he came to see me at Christ Church, and we made a show of writing to one another, and didn't, and always had a hearty mutual goodwill; and though we did not quite burst into tears on parting, were yet quite happy when occasion threw us together, and so almost lost sight of each other. I heard lately that Berry was married, and am rather ashamed to say, that I was not so curious as even to ask the maiden name of his lady.

Last summer I was at Paris, and had gone over to Versailles to meet a party, one of which was a young lady to whom I was tenderly But, never mind. The day was rainy, and the party did not keep its appointment; and after yawning through the interminable palace picture-galleries, and then making an attempt to smoke a cigar in the palace-garden—for which crime I was nearly run through the body by a rascally sentinel—I was driven, perforce, into the great, bleak, lonely *place* before the palace, with its roads branching off to all the towns in the world, which Louis and Napoleon once intended to conquer,

and there enjoyed my favourite pursuit at leisure, and was meditating whether I should go back to Véfour's for dinner, or patronize my friend M. Duboux of the Hôtel des Réservoirs, who gives not only a good dinner, but as dear a one as heart can desire. I was, I say, meditating these things, when a carriage passed by. It was a smart, low calash, with a pair of bay horses and a postilion in a drab jacket, that twinkled with innumerable buttons, and I was too much occupied in admiring the build of the machine, and the extreme tightness of the fellow's inexpressibles, to look at the personages within the carriage, when the gentleman roared out, 'Fitz !' and the postilion pulled up, and the lady gave a shrill scream, and a little black-muzzled spaniel began barking and yelling with all his might, and a man with moustaches jumped out of the vehicle, and began shaking me by the hand.

'Drive home, John,' said the gentleman ; 'I'll be with you, my love, in an instant—it's an old friend. Fitz, let me present you to Mrs. Berry.'

The lady made an exceedingly gentle inclination of her black velvet bonnet, and said, 'Pray, my love, remember that it is just dinner-time. However, never mind *me*.' And with another slight toss and a nod to the postilion, that individual's white leather breeches began to jump up and down again in the saddle, and the carriage disappeared, leaving me shaking my old friend Berry by the hand.

He had long quitted the army, but still wore his military beard, which gave to his fair, pink face a fierce and lion-like look. He was extraordinarily glad to see me, as only men are glad who live in a small town, or in dull company. There is no destroyer of friendships like London, where a man has no time to think of his neighbour, and has far too many friends to care for them. He told me in a breath of his marriage, and how happy he was, and straight insisted that I must come home to dinner, and see more of Angelica, who had invited me herself—didn't I hear her ?

'Mrs. Berry asked *you*, Frank ; but I certainly did not hear her ask *me* !'

'She would not have mentioned the dinner but that she meant me to ask you. I know she did,' cried Frank Berry. 'And, besides—hang it—I'm master of the house. So come you shall. No ceremony, old boy—one or two friends—

snug family party—and we'll talk of old times over a bottle of claret.'

There did not seem to me to be the slightest objection to this arrangement, except that my boots were muddy, and my coat of the morning sort. But as it was quite impossible to go to Paris and back again in a quarter of an hour, and as a man may dine with perfect comfort to himself in a frock-coat, it did not occur to me to be particularly squeamish, or to decline an old friend's invitation upon a pretext so trivial.

Accordingly we walked to a small house in the Avenue de Paris, and were admitted first into a small garden ornamented by a grotto, a fountain, and several nymphs in plaster of Paris, then up a mouldy, old steep stair into a hall, where a statue of Cupid and another of Venus welcomed us with their eternal simper; then through a *salle-à-manger*, where covers were laid for six; and finally to a little saloon, where Fido the dog began to howl furiously according to his wont.

It was one of the old pavilions that had been built for a pleasure-house in the gay days of Versailles, ornamented with abundance of damp Cupids and cracked gilt cornices, and old mirrors let into the walls, and gilded once, but now painted a dingy French white. The long low windows looked into the court where the fountain played its ceaseless dribble, surrounded by numerous rank creepers and weedy flowers, but in the midst of which the statues stood with their bases quite moist and green.

I hate fountains and statues in dark, confined places: that cheerless, endless plashing of water is the most inhospitable sound ever heard. The stiff grin of those French statues, or ogling Canova Graces, is by no means more happy, I think, than the smile of a skeleton, and not so natural. Those little pavilions in which the old *roués* sported, were never meant to be seen by daylight, depend on't. They were lighted up with a hundred wax-candles, and the little fountain yonder was meant only to cool their claret. And so, my first impression of Berry's place of abode was rather a dismal one. However, I heard him in the *salle-à-manger* drawing the corks, which went off with a *cloup*, and that consoled me.

As for the furniture of the rooms appertaining to the Berrys, there was a harp in a leather case, and a piano, and

a flute-box, and a huge tambour with a Saracen's nose just begun, and likewise on the table a multiplicity of those little gilt books, half sentimental and half religious, which the wants of the age and of our young ladies have produced in such numbers of late. I quarrel with no lady's taste in that way; but heigho! I had rather that Mrs. Fitz-Boodle should read *Humphry Clinker*!

Besides these works, there was a *Peerage*, of course. What genteel family was ever without one?

I was making for the door to see Frank drawing the corks, and was bounced at by the amiable, little, black-muzzled spaniel, who fastened his teeth in my pantaloons, and received a polite kick in consequence, which sent him howling to the other end of the room, and the animal was just in the act of performing that feat of agility, when the door opened and madam made her appearance. Frank came behind her, peering over her shoulder with rather an anxious look.

Mrs. Berry is an exceedingly white and lean person. She has thick eyebrows which meet rather dangerously over her nose, which is Grecian, and a small mouth with no lips—a sort of feeble pucker in the face, as it were. Under her eyebrows are a pair of enormous eyes, which she is in the habit of turning constantly ceiling-wards. Her hair is rather scarce and worn in bandeaux, and she commonly mounts a sprig of laurel, or a dark flower or two, which, with the sham-tour—I believe that is the name of the knob of artificial hair that many ladies sport—gives her a rigid and classical look. She is dressed in black, and has invariably the neatest of silk stockings and shoes; for forsooth her foot is a fine one, and she always sits with it before her, looking at it, stamping it, and admiring it a great deal. 'Fido,' she says to her spaniel, 'you have almost crushed my poor foot;' or 'Frank,' to her husband, 'bring me a footstool;' or, 'I suffer so from cold in the feet,' and so forth; but be the conversation what it will, she is always sure to put *her foot* into it.

She invariably wears on her neck the miniature of her late father, Sir George Catacomb, apothecary to George III; and she thinks those two men the greatest the world ever saw. She was born in Baker Street, Portman Square, and that is saying almost enough of her. She is as long, as genteel, and as dreary, as that deadly-lively place, and

sports, by way of ornament, her papa's hatchment, as it were, as every tenth Baker Street house has taught her.

What induced such a jolly fellow as Frank Berry to marry Miss Angelica Catacomb no one can tell. He met her, he says, at a ball at Hampton Court, where his regiment was quartered, and where, to this day, lives 'her aunt Lady Pash.' She alludes perpetually in conversation to that celebrated lady; and if you look in the *Baronetage* to the pedigree of the Pash family, you may see manuscript notes by Mrs. Frank Berry, relative to them and herself. Thus, when you see in print that Sir John Pash married Angelica, daughter of Graves Catacomb, Esq., in a neat hand you find written, *and sister of the late Sir George Catacomb, of Baker Street, Portman Square*; 'A. B.' follows of course. It is a wonder how fond ladies are of writing in books and signing their charming initials! Mrs. Berry's before-mentioned little gilt books are scored with pencil-marks, or occasionally at the margin with a!—note of interjection, or the words, '*Too true, A. B.*' and so on. Much may be learned with regard to lovely woman by a look at the book she reads in; and I had gained no inconsiderable knowledge of Mrs. Berry by the ten minutes spent in the drawing-room, while she was at her toilet in the adjoining bed-chamber.

'You have often heard me talk of George Fitz,' says Berry, with an appealing look to madam.

'Very often,' answered his lady, in a tone which clearly meant 'a great deal too much.' 'Pray, sir,' continued she, looking at my boots with all her might, 'are we to have your company at dinner?'

'Of course you are, my dear; what else do you think he came for? You would not have the man go back to Paris to get his evening coat, would you?'

'At least, my love, I hope you will go and put on *yours*, and change those muddy boots. Lady Pash will be here in five minutes, and you know Dobus is as punctual as clock-work.' Then turning to me with a sort of apology that was as consoling as a box on the ear, 'We have some friends at dinner, sir, who are rather particular persons; but I am sure when they hear that you only came on a sudden invitation, they will excuse your morning dress.—Bah, what a smell of smoke!'

With this speech madam placed herself majestically on

a sofa, put out her foot, called Fido, and relapsed into an icy silence. Frank had long since evacuated the premises, with a rueful look at his wife, but never daring to cast a glance at me. I saw the whole business at once; here was this lion of a fellow tamed down by a she Van Amburgh, and fetching and carrying at her orders a great deal more obediently than her little, yowling, black-muzzled darling of a Fido.

I am not, however, to be tamed so easily, and was determined in this instance not to be in the least disconcerted, or to show the smallest sign of ill humour: so to *renouer* the conversation, I began about Lady Pash.

'I heard you mention the name of Pash, I think,' said I; 'I know a lady of that name, and a very ugly one it is too.'

'It is most probably not the same person,' answered Mrs. Berry, with a look which intimated that a fellow like me could never have had the honour to know so exalted a person.

'I mean old Lady Pash of Hampton Court. Fat woman—fair, ain't she—and wears an amethyst in her forehead, has one eye, a blond wig, and dresses in light green?'

'Lady Pash, sir, is MY AUNT,' answered Mrs. Berry (not altogether displeased, although she expected money from the old lady; but you know we love to hear our friends abused when it can be safely done).

'Oh, indeed! she was a daughter of old Catacomb's of Windsor, I remember, the undertaker. They called her husband Callipash, and her ladyship Pishpash. So you see, madam, that I know the whole family!'

'Mr. Fitz-Simons!' exclaimed Mrs. Berry, rising, 'I am not accustomed to hear nicknames applied to myself and my family; and must beg you, when you honour us with your company, to spare our feelings as much as possible. Mr. Catacomb had the confidence of his SOVEREIGN, sir, and Sir John Pash was of Charles II's creation. The one was my uncle, sir, the other my grandfather!'

'My dear madam, I am extremely sorry, and most sincerely apologize for my inadvertence. But you owe me an apology too: my name is not Fitz-Simons, but Fitz-Boodle.'

'What! of Booodle Hall—my husband's old friend; of Charles I's creation? My dear sir, I beg you a thousand

pardons, and am delighted to welcome a person of whom I have heard Frank say so much. Frank (to Berry, who soon entered in very glossy boots and a white waistcoat), do you know, darling, I mistook Mr. Fitz-Boodle for Mr. Fitz-Simons—that horrid, Irish, horse-dealing person; and I never, never, never can pardon myself for being so rude to him.'

The big eyes here assumed an expression that was intended to kill me outright with kindness—from being calm, still, reserved, Angelica suddenly became gay, smiling, confidential, and *folâtre*. She told me she had heard I was a sad creature, and that she intended to reform me, and that I must come and see Frank a great deal.

Now, although Mr. Fitz-Simons, for whom I was mistaken, is as low a fellow as ever came out of Dublin, and having been a captain in somebody's army, is now a blackleg and horse-dealer by profession; yet if I had brought him home to Mrs. Fitz-Boodle to dinner, I should have liked far better that that imaginary lady should have received him with decent civility, and not insulted the stranger within her husband's gates. And, although it was delightful to be received so cordially when the mistake was discovered, yet I found that *all* Berry's old acquaintances were by no means so warmly welcomed; for another old school-chum presently made his appearance, who was treated in a very different manner.

This was no other than poor Jack Butts, who is a sort of small artist and picture-dealer by profession, and was a day-boy at Slaughter House when we were there, and very serviceable in bringing in sausages, pots of pickles, and other articles of merchandise, which we could not otherwise procure. The poor fellow has been employed, seemingly, in the same office of fetcher and carrier ever since; and occupied that post for Mrs. Berry. It was, 'Mr. Butts, have you finished that drawing for Lady Pash's album?' and Butts produced it; and, 'Did you match the silk for me at Delille's?' and there was the silk, bought, no doubt, with the poor fellow's last five francs; and, 'Did you go to the furniture man in the Rue St. Jacques; and bring the canary-seed, and call about my shawl at that odious, dawdling Madame Fichet's; and have you brought the guitar-strings?'

Butts hadn't brought the guitar-strings; and thereupon

Mrs. Berry's countenance assumed the same terrible expression which I had formerly remarked in it, and which made me tremble for Berry.

'My dear Angelica, though,' said he with some spirit, 'Jack Butts isn't a baggage-wagon, nor a Jack-of-all-trades; you make him paint pictures for your women's albums, and look after your upholsterer, and your canary-bird, and your milliners, and turn rusty because he forgets your last message.'

'I did not turn *rusty*, Frank, as you call it elegantly. I'm very much obliged to Mr. Butts for performing my commissions—very much obliged. And as for not paying for the pictures to which you so kindly allude, Frank, I should never have thought of offering payment for so paltry a service; but I'm sure I shall be happy to pay if Mr. Butts will send me in his bill.'

'By Jove, Angelica, this is too much!' bounced out Berry; but the little matrimonial squabble was abruptly ended by Berry's French man flinging open the door and announcing MILADI PASH and Doctor Dobus, which two personages made their appearance.

The person of old Pash has been already parenthetically described. But quite different from her dismal niece in temperament, she is as jolly an old widow as ever wore weeds. She was attached somehow to the court, and has a multiplicity of stories about the princesses and the old king, to which Mrs. Berry never fails to call your attention in her grave, important way. Lady Pash has ridden many a time to the Windsor hounds: she made her husband become a member of the Four-in-hand Club, and has numberless stories about Sir Godfrey Webster, Sir John Lade, and the old heroes of those times. She has lent a rouleau to Dick Sheridan, and remembers Lord Byron when he was a sulky, slim, young lad. She says Charles Fox was the pleasantest fellow she ever met with, and has not the slightest objection to inform you that one of the princes was very much in love with her. Yet somehow she is only fifty-two years old, and I have never been able to understand her calculation. One day or other before her eye went out, and before those pearly teeth of hers were stuck to her gums by gold, she must have been a pretty-looking body enough. Yet in spite of the latter inconvenience, she eats and drinks too much every day, and tosses off a glass of maraschino

with a trembling, pudgy hand, every finger of which twinkles with a dozen, at least, of old rings. She has a story about every one of those rings, and a stupid one too. But there is always something pleasant, I think, in stupid family stories : they are good-hearted people who tell them.

As for Mrs. Muchit, nothing need be said of her : she is Pash's companion, she has lived with Lady Pash since the peace. Nor does my lady take any more notice of her than of the dust of the earth. She calls her 'poor Muchit,' and considers her a half-witted creature. Mrs. Berry hates her cordially, and thinks she is a designing toad-eater, who has formed a conspiracy to rob her of her aunt's fortune. She never spoke a word to poor Muchit during the whole of dinner, or offered to help her to anything on the table.

In respect to Dobus, he is an old Peninsular man, as you are made to know before you have been very long in his company ; and, like most army surgeons, is a great deal more military in his looks and conversation, than the combatant part of the forces. He has adopted the sham Duke-of-Wellington air, which is by no means uncommon in veterans ; and though one of the easiest and softest fellows in existence, speaks slowly and briefly, and raps out an oath or two occasionally, as it is said a certain great captain does. Besides the above, we sat down to table with Capt. Goff, late of the ——— Highlanders ; the Rev. Lemuel Whey, who preaches at St. Germain's ; little Cutler, and the Frenchman, who always *will* be at English parties on the Continent, and who, after making some frightful efforts to speak English, subsides and is heard of no more. Young married ladies and heads of families generally have him for the purpose of waltzing, and in return he informs his friends of the club or the café that he has made the conquest of a *charmante Anglaise*. Listen to me, all family men who read this ! and never let an *unmarried Frenchman* into your doors. This lecture alone is worth the price of the whole paper. It is not that they do any harm in one case out of a thousand, Heaven forbid ! but they mean harm. They look on our Susannas with unholy, dishonest eyes. Harken to two of the grinning rogues chattering together as they clink over the asphalt of the Boulevard with lacquered boots, and plastered hair, and waxed moustaches, and turned-down shirt-collars, and stays and goggling eyes,

and hear how they talk of a good, simple, giddy, vain, dull, Baker Street creature, and canvass her points, and show her letters, and insinuate—never mind, but I tell you my soul grows angry when I think of the same ; and I can't hear of an Englishwoman marrying a Frenchman, without feeling a sort of shame and pity for her.¹

To return to the guests. The Rev. Lemuel Whey is a tea-party man, with a curl on his forehead and a scented pocket-handkerchief. He ties his white neckcloth to a wonder, and I believe sleeps in it. He brings his flute with him ; and prefers Handel, of course ; but has one or two pet profane songs of the sentimental kind, and will occasionally lift up his little pipe in a glee. He does not dance, but the honest fellow would give the world to do it ; and he leaves his clogs in the passage, though it is a wonder he wears them, for in the muddiest weather he never has a speck on his foot. He was at St. John's College, Cambridge, and was rather gay for a term or two, he says. He is, in a word, full of the milk-and-water of human kindness, and his family lives near Hackney.

As for Goff, he has a huge, shining, bald forehead, and immense, bristling, Indian-red whiskers. He wears white wash-leather gloves, drinks fairly, likes a rubber, and has a story for after dinner, beginning, ' Doctor, ye racklackt Sandy M'Lellan, who joined us in the West Indies. Wal, sir,' &c. These and little Cutler made up the party.

Now it may not have struck all readers, but any sharp fellow conversant with writing must have found out long ago, that if there had been something exceedingly interesting to narrate with regard to this dinner at Frank Berry's, I should have come out with it a couple of pages since, nor have kept the public looking for so long a time at the dish-covers and ornaments of the table.

But the simple fact must now be told, that there was

¹ Every person who has lived abroad, can, of course, point out a score of honourable exceptions to the case above hinted at, and knows many such unions in which it is the Frenchman who honours the English lady by marrying her. But it must be remembered that marrying in France means commonly *fortune-hunting* : and as for the respect in which marriage is held in France, let all the French novels in M. Rolandi's library be perused by those who wish to come to a decision upon the question.

nothing of the slightest importance occurred at this repast, except that it gave me an opportunity of studying Mrs. Berry in many different ways ; and, in spite of the extreme complaisance which she now showed me, of forming, I am sorry to say, a most unfavourable opinion of that fair lady. Truth to tell, I would much rather she should have been civil to Mrs. Muchit, than outrageously complimentary to your humble servant ; and, as she professed not to know what on earth there was for dinner, would it not have been much more natural for her not to frown, and bob, and wink, and point, and pinch her lips as often as Monsieur Anatole, her French domestic, not knowing the ways of English dinner-tables, placed anything out of its due order ? The allusions to Boodle Hall were innumerable, and I don't know any greater bore than to be obliged to talk of a place which belongs to one's elder brother. Many questions were likewise asked about the dowager and her Scotch relatives, the Plumduffs, about whom Lady Pash knew a great deal, having seen them at court and at Lord Melville's. Of course she had seen them at court and at Lord Melville's, as she might have seen thousands of Scotchmen besides ; but what mattered it to me, who care not a jot for old Lady Fitz-Boodle ? ' When you write, you'll say you met an old friend of her ladyship's,' says Mrs. Berry, and I faithfully promised I would when I wrote ; but if the New Post-Office paid us for writing letters (as very possibly it will soon), I could not be bribed to send a line to old Lady Fitz.

In a word I found that Berry, like many simple fellows before him, had made choice of an imperious, ill-humoured, and underbred female for a wife, and could see with half an eye that he was a great deal too much her slave.

The struggle was not over yet, however. Witness that little encounter before dinner ; and once or twice the honest fellow replied rather smartly during the repast, taking especial care to atone as much as possible for his wife's inattention to Jack and Mrs. Muchit, by particular attention to those personages, whom he helped to everything round about and pressed perpetually to champagne ; he drank but little himself, for his amiable wife's eye was constantly fixed on him.

Just at the conclusion of the dessert, madam, who had *boudé'd* Berry during dinner-time, became particularly

gracious to her lord and master, and tenderly asked me if I did not think the French custom was a good one, of men leaving table with the ladies.

'Upon my word, ma'am,' says I, 'I think it's a most abominable practice.'

'And so do I,' says Cutler.

'A most abominable practice! Do you hear *that*?' cries Berry, laughing, and filling his glass.

'I'm sure, Frank, when we are alone you always come to the drawing-room,' replies the lady, sharply.

'Oh, yes! when we're alone, darling,' says Berry, blushing; 'but now we're *not* alone—ha, ha! Anatole, du Bordeaux!'

'I'm sure they sat after the ladies at Carlton House; didn't they, Lady Pash?' says Dobus, who likes his glass.

'*That* they did!' says my lady, giving him a jolly nod.

'I racklackt,' exclaims Captain Goff, 'when I was in the Mauritius, that Mestress MacWhirter, who commanded the Saxty-Sackond, used to say, "Mac, if ye want to get lively, ye'll not stop for more than two hours after the leddies have laft ye: if ye want to get drunk, ye'll just dine at the mass." So ye see, Mestress Barry, what was Mac's allowance—haw, haw! Mester Whey, I'll trouble ye for the o-lives.'

But although we were in a clear majority, that indomitable woman, Mrs. Berry, determined to make us all as uneasy as possible, and would take the votes all round. Poor Jack, of course, sided with her, and Whey said he loved a cup of tea and a little music better than all the wine of Bordeaux. As for the Frenchman, when Mrs. Berry said, 'And what do you think, M. le Vicomte?'

'Vat you speak?' said M. de Blagueval, breaking silence for the first time during two hours; 'yase—eh? to me you speak?'

'*Apny deeny, aimy-voo ally avec les dam?*'

'*Comment avec les dames?*'

'*Ally avec les dam com a Parry, ou resty avec les Messew com on Onglyterre?*'

'*Ah, madame! vous me le demandez?*' cries the little wretch, starting up in a theatrical way; and putting out his hand, which Mrs. Berry took, and with this the ladies

left the room. Old Lady Pash trotted after her niece with her hand in Whey's, very much wondering at such practices, which were not in the least in vogue in the reign of George III.

Mrs. Berry cast a glance of triumph at her husband, at the defection; and Berry was evidently annoyed that three-eighths of his male forces had left him.

But fancy our delight and astonishment, when in a minute they all three came back again; the Frenchman looking entirely astonished, and the parson and the painter both very queer. The fact is, old downright Lady Pash, who had never been in Paris in her life before, and had no notion of being deprived of her usual hour's respite and nap, said at once to Mrs. Berry, 'My dear Angelica, you're surely not going to keep these three men here? Send them back to the dining-room, for I've a thousand things to say to you.' And Angelica, who expects to inherit her aunt's property, of course did as she was bid; on which the old lady fell into an easy chair, and fell asleep immediately,—so soon, that is, as the shout caused by the reappearance of the three gentlemen in the dining-room had subsided.

I had meanwhile had some private conversation with little Cutler regarding the character of Mrs. Berry. 'She's a regular screw,' whispered he; 'a regular tartar. Berry shows fight, though, sometimes, and I've known him have his own way for a week together. After dinner he is his own master, and hers when he has had his share of wine; and that's why she will never allow him to drink any.'

Was it a wicked or was it a noble and honourable thought which came to us both at the same minute, to rescue Berry from his captivity? The ladies, of course, will give their verdict according to their gentle natures; but I know what men of courage will think, and by their jovial judgement will abide.

We received, then, the three lost sheep back into our innocent fold again with the most joyous shouting and cheering. We made Berry (who was, in truth, nothing loth) order up I don't know how much more claret. We obliged the Frenchman to drink *malgré lui*; and in the course of a short time we had poor Whey in such a state of excitement, that he actually volunteered to sing a song,

which he said he had heard at some very gay supper party at Cambridge, and which begins :—

A pye sat on a pear-tree,
A pye sat on a pear-tree,
A pye sat on a pear-tree,
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho, heigh-ho !

Fancy Mrs. Berry's face as she looked in, in the midst of that Bacchanalian ditty, when she saw no less a person than the Rev. Lemuel Whey carolling it.

'Is it you, my dear ?' cries Berry, as brave now as any Petruchio. 'Come in, and sit down, and hear Whey's song.'

'Lady Pash is asleep, Frank,' said she.

'Well, darling ! that's the very reason. Give Mrs. Berry a glass, Jack, will you ?'

'Would you wake your aunt, sir ?' hissed out madam.

'*Never mind me, love ! I'm awake, and like it !*' cried the venerable Lady Pash from the *salon*. 'Sing away, gentlemen !'

At which we all set up an audacious cheer ; and Mrs. Berry flounced back to the drawing-room, but did not leave the door open, that her aunt might hear our melodies.

Berry had by this time arrived at that confidential state to which a third bottle always brings the well-regulated mind ; and he made a clean confession to Cutler and myself of his numerous matrimonial annoyances. He was not allowed to dine out, he said, and but seldom to ask his friends to meet him at home. He never dared smoke a cigar for the life of him, not even in the stables. He spent the mornings dawdling in eternal shops, the evenings at endless tea-parties, or in reading poems or missionary tracts to his wife. He was compelled to take physic whenever she thought he looked a little pale, to change his shoes and stockings whenever he came in from a walk. 'Look here,' said he, opening his chest, and shaking his fist at Dobus ; 'look what Angelica and that infernal Dobus have brought me to.'

I thought it might be a flannel waistcoat into which madam had forced him : but it was worse : I give you my word of honour it was a *pitch-plaster* !

We all roared at this, and the doctor as loud as any one ; but he vowed that he had no hand in the pitch-plaster.

It was a favourite family remedy of the late apothecary, Sir George Catacomb, and had been put on by Mrs. Berry's own fair hands.

When Anatole came in with coffee, Berry was in such high courage, that he told him to go to the deuce with it ; and we never caught sight of Lady Pash more, except, when muffled up to the nose, she passed through the *salle-à-manger* to go to her carriage, in which Dobus and the parson were likewise to be transported to Paris. 'Be a man, Frank,' says she, 'and hold your own,' for the good old lady had taken her nephew's part in the matrimonial business ; 'and you, Mr. Fitz-Boodle, come and see him often. You're a good fellow, take old one-eyed Calipash's word for it. Shall I take you to Paris ?'

Dear, kind Angelica, she had told her aunt all I said !

'Don't go, George,' says Berry, squeezing me by the hand. So I said I was going to sleep at Versailles that night ; but if she would give a convoy to Jack Butts, it would be conferring a great obligation on him ; with which favour the old lady accordingly complied, saying to him, with great coolness, 'Get up, and sit with John in the rumble, Mr. What-d'ye-call-'em.' The fact is, the good old soul despises an artist as much as she does a tailor.

Jack tripped to his place very meekly ; and 'Remember Saturday,' cried the doctor ; and, 'Don't forget Thursday,' exclaimed the divine,—'a bachelors' party, you know.' And so the cavalcade drove thundering down the gloomy old Avenue de Paris.

The Frenchman, I forgot to say, had gone away exceedingly ill long before ; and the reminiscences of 'Thursday' and 'Saturday' evoked by Dobus and Whey, were, to tell the truth, parts of our conspiracy : for in the heat of Berry's courage, we had made him promise to dine with us all round *en garçon*, with all except Captain Goff, who 'racklacted' that he was engaged every day for the next three weeks, as indeed he is, to a thirty-sous ordinary which the gallant officer frequents, when not invited elsewhere.

Cutler and I then were the last on the field ; and though we were for moving away, Berry, whose vigour had, if possible, been excited by the bustle and colloquy in the night air, insisted upon dragging us back again, and actually proposed a grill for supper !

We found in the *salle-à-manger* a strong smell of an extinguished lamp, and Mrs. Berry was snuffing out the candles on the sideboard.

‘Hullo, my dear!’ shouts Berry: ‘easily, if you please! we’ve not done yet!’

‘Not done yet, Mr. Berry!’ groans the lady, in a hollow, sepulchral tone.

‘No, Mrs. B., not done yet. We are going to have some supper, ain’t we, George?’

‘I think it’s quite time to go home,’ said Mr. Fitz-Boodle (who, to say the truth, began to tremble himself).

‘I think it is, sir; you are quite right, sir; you will pardon me, gentlemen, I have a bad headache, and will retire.’

‘Good night, my dear!’ said that audacious Berry. ‘Anatole, tell the cook to broil a fowl, and bring some wine.’

If the loving couple had been alone, or if Cutler had not been an attaché to the embassy, before whom she was afraid of making herself ridiculous, I am confident that Mrs. Berry would have fainted away on the spot; and that all Berry’s courage would have tumbled down lifeless by the side of her. So she only gave a martyred look, and left the room; and while we partook of the very unnecessary repast, was good enough to sing some hymn tunes to an exceedingly slow movement in the next room, intimating that she was awake, and that, though suffering, she found her consolations in religion.

These melodies did not in the least add to our friend’s courage. The devilled fowl had, somehow, no devil in it. The champagne in the glasses looked exceedingly flat and blue. The fact is, that Cutler and I were now both in a state of dire consternation, and soon made a move for our hats, and lighting each a cigar in the hall, made across the little green where the Cupids and nymphs were listening to the dribbling fountain in the dark.

‘I’m hanged if I don’t have a cigar too!’ says Berry, rushing after us; and accordingly putting in his pocket a key about the size of a shovel, which hung by the little handle of the outer grille, forth he sallied, and joined us in our fumigation.

He stayed with us a couple of hours, and returned homewards in perfect good spirits, having given me his word of honour he would dine with us the next day. He put

in his immense key into the grille, and unlocked it ; but the gate would not open : *it was bolted within.*

He began to make a furious jangling and ringing at the bell ; and in oaths, both French and English, called upon the recalcitrant Anatole.

After much tolling of the bell, a light came cutting across the crevices of the inner door ; it was thrown open, and a figure appeared with a lamp,—a tall, slim figure of a woman, clothed in white from head to foot.



It was Mrs. Berry, and when Cutler and I saw her, we both ran as fast as our legs could carry us.

Berry, at this, shrieked with a wild laughter. 'Remember to-morrow, old boys,' shouted he,—'six o'clock ;' and we were a quarter of a mile off when the gate closed, and the little mansion of the Avenue de Paris was once more quiet and dark.

The next afternoon, as we were playing at billiards, Cutler saw Mrs. Berry drive by in her carriage ; and as soon as rather a long rubber was over, I thought I would go and look for our poor friend, and so went down to the Pavillon. Every door was open, as the wont is in France, and I walked in unannounced, and saw this :

He was playing a duet with her on the flute. She had been out but for half an hour, after not speaking all the morning ; and having seen Cutler at the billiard-room window, and suspecting we might take advantage of her absence, she had suddenly returned home again, and had flung herself, weeping, into her Frank's arms, and said she could not bear to leave him in anger. And so, after sitting for a little while sobbing on his knee, she had forgotten and forgiven everything.

The dear angel ! I met poor Frank in Bond Street only

yesterday ; but he crossed over to the other side of the way. He had on galoshes, and is grown very fat and pale. He has shaved off his moustachios, and, instead, wears a respirator. He has taken his name off all his clubs, and lives very grimly in Baker Street. Well, ladies, no doubt you say he is right ; and what are the odds, so long as *you* are happy ?

G. F.-B.

II.

THE RAVENSWING

[*Fraser's Magazine*, April to June, August and September, 1843.]

CHAPTER I

WHICH IS ENTIRELY INTRODUCTORY—CONTAINS AN ACCOUNT
OF MISS CRUMP, HER SUITORS, AND HER FAMILY CIRCLE

IN a certain quiet and sequestered nook of the retired village of London—perhaps in the neighbourhood of Berkeley Square, or at any rate somewhere near Burlington Gardens—there was once a house of entertainment called the Bootjack Hotel. Mr. Crump, the landlord, had, in the outset of life, performed the duties of boots in some inn even more frequented than his own, and, far from being ashamed of his origin, as many persons are in the days of their prosperity, had thus solemnly recorded it over the hospitable gate of his hotel.

Crump married Miss Budge, so well known to the admirers of the festive dance on the other side of the water as Miss Delancy; and they had one daughter, named Morgiana, after that celebrated part in the *Forty Thieves* which Miss Budge performed with unbounded applause both at the Surrey and the Wells. Mrs. Crump sat in a little bar, profusely ornamented with pictures of the dancers of all ages, from Hillisberg, Rose, Parisot, who plied the light fantastic toe in 1805, down to the Sylphides of our day. There was in the collection a charming portrait of herself, done by De Wilde; she was in the dress of Morgiana, and in the act of pouring, to very slow music, a quantity of boiling oil into one of the forty jars. In this sanctuary she sat, with black eyes, black hair, a purple face and a turban, and, morning, noon, or night, as you went into the parlour of the hotel, there was Mrs. Crump taking tea (with a little something in it), looking at the fashions, or reading

Cumberland's *British Theatre*. The *Sunday Times* was her paper, for she voted the *Dispatch*, that journal which is taken in by most ladies of her profession, to be vulgar and Radical, and loved the theatrical gossip in which the other mentioned journal abounds.

The fact is, that the Royal Bootjack, though a humble, was a very genteel house ; and a very little persuasion would induce Mr. Crump, as he looked at his own door in the sun, to tell you that he had himself once drawn off with that very bootjack the top-boots of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and the first gentleman in Europe. While, then, the houses of entertainment in the neighbourhood were loud in their pretended Liberal politics, the Bootjack stuck to the good old Conservative line, and was only frequented by such persons as were of that way of thinking. There were two parlours, much accustomed, one for the gentlemen of the shoulder-knot, who came from the houses of their employers hard by ; another for some ' gents who used the 'ouse,' as Mrs. Crump would say (Heaven bless her !) in her simple Cockniac dialect, and who formed a little club there.

I forgot to say that while Mrs. C. was sipping her eternal tea or washing up her endless blue china, you might often hear Miss Morgiana, employed at the little red silk cottage piano, singing, ' Come where the haspens quiver,' or ' Bonny lad, march over hill and furrow,' or ' My art and lute,' or any other popular piece of the day. And the dear girl sang with very considerable skill too, for she had a fine loud voice, which, if not always in tune, made up for that defect by its great energy and activity ; and Morgiana was not content with singing the mere tune, but gave every one of the roulades, flourishes, and ornaments as she heard them at the theatres by Mrs. Humby, Mrs. Waylett, or Madame Vestris. The girl had a fine black eye like her mamma, a grand enthusiasm for the stage, as every actor's child will have, and, if the truth must be known, had appeared many and many a time at the theatre in Catherine Street, in minor parts first, and then in Little Pickle, in Desdemona, in Rosina, and in Miss Foote's part where she used to dance ; I have not the name to my hand, but think it is Davidson. Four times in the week, at least, her mother and she used to sail off at night to some place of public amusement, for Mrs. Crump had a mysterious acquaintance with all sorts

of theatrical personages ; and the gates of her old haunt, ' the Wells,' of the Coburg (by the kind permission of Mrs. Davidge), nay, of the Lane and the Market themselves, flew open before her ' Open sesame,' as the robbers' door did to her colleague, Ali Baba (Hornbuckle), in the operatic piece in which she was so famous.

Beer was Mr. Crump's beverage, variegated by a little gin, in the evenings ; and little need be said of this gentleman except that he discharged his duties honourably, and filled the president's chair at the club as completely as it could possibly be filled ; for he could not even sit in it in his great-coat, so accurately was the seat adapted to him. His wife and daughter, perhaps, thought somewhat slightly of him, for he had no literary tastes, and had never been at a theatre since he took his bride from one. He was valet to Lord Slapper at the time, and certain it is that his lordship set him up in the Bootjack, and that stories *had* been told. But what are such to you or me ? Let bygones be bygones ; Mrs. Crump was quite as honest as her neighbours, and Miss had 500*l.* to be paid down on the day of her wedding.

Those who know the habits of the British tradesman are aware that he has gregarious propensities like any lord in the land ; that he loves a joke, that he is not averse to a glass ; that after the day's toil he is happy to consort with men of his degree ; and that as society is not so far advanced among us as to allow him to enjoy the comforts of splendid club-houses, which are open to many persons with not a tenth part of his pecuniary means, he meets his friends in the cosy tavern parlour, where a neat sanded floor, a large Windsor chair, and a glass of hot something and water, make him as happy as any of the clubmen in their magnificent saloons.

At the Bootjack was, as we have said, a very genteel and select society, called the Kidney Club, from the fact that on Saturday evenings a little graceful supper of broiled kidneys was usually discussed by the members of the club. Saturday was their grand night ; not but that they met on all other nights in the week when inclined for festivity ; and indeed some of them could not come on Saturdays in the summer, having elegant villas in the suburbs, where they passed the six-and-thirty hours of recreation that are happily to be found at the end of every week.

There was Mr. Balls, the great grocer of South Audley Street, a warm man, who, they say, had his 20,000*l.*; Jack Snaffle, of the mews hard by, a capital fellow for a song; Clinker, the ironmonger, all married gentlemen and in the best line of business; Tressle, the undertaker, &c. No liveries were admitted into the room, as may be imagined, but one or two select butlers and major-domos joined the circle, for the persons composing it knew very well how important it was to be on good terms with these gentlemen: and many a time my lord's account would never have been paid, and my lady's large order never have been given, but for the conversation which took place at the Bootjack, and the friendly intercourse subsisting between all the members of the society.

The tiptop men of the society were two bachelors, and two as fashionable tradesmen as any in the town. Mr. Woolsey, from Stultz's, of the famous house of Linsey, Woolsey & Co., of Conduit Street, tailors; and Mr. Eglantine, the celebrated perruquier and perfumer of Bond Street, whose soaps, razors, and patent ventilating scalp, are known throughout Europe. Linsey, the senior partner of the tailors' firm, had his handsome mansion in Regent's Park, drove his buggy, and did little more than lend his name to the house. Woolsey lived in it, was the working man of the firm, and it was said that his cut was as magnificent as that of any man in the profession. Woolsey and Eglantine were rivals in many ways,—rivals in fashion, rivals in wit, and, above all, rivals for the hand of an amiable young lady whom we have already mentioned, the dark-eyed songstress Morgiana Crump. They were both desperately in love with her, that was the truth; and each, in the absence of the other, abused his rival heartily. Of the hairdresser, Woolsey said, that as for Eglantine being his real name, it was all his (Mr. Woolsey's) eye; that he was in the hands of the Jews, and his stock and grand shop eaten up by usury. And with regard to Woolsey, Eglantine remarked, that his pretence of being descended from the cardinal was all nonsense; that he was a partner, certainly, in the firm, but had only a sixteenth share; and that the firm could never get their moneys in, and had an immense number of bad debts in their books. As is usual, there was a great deal of truth and a great deal of malice in these tales; however, the gentlemen were, take them all in all, in a very

fashionable way of business, and had their claims to Miss Morgiana's hand backed by the parents. Mr. Crump was a partisan of the tailor ; while Mrs. C. was a strong advocate for the claims of the enticing perfumer.

Now, it was a curious fact, that these two gentlemen were each in need of the other's services—Woolsey being afflicted with premature baldness, or some other necessity for a wig still more fatal—Eglantine being a very fat man, who required much art to make his figure at all decent. He wore a brown frock-coat and frogs, and attempted by all sorts of contrivances to hide his obesity ; but Woolsey's remark, that, dress as he would, he would always look like a snob, and that there was only one man in England who could make a gentleman of him, went to the perfumer's soul ; and if there was one thing on earth he longed for (not including the hand of Miss Crump), it was to have a coat from Linsey's, in which costume he was sure that Morgiana would not resist him.

If Eglantine was uneasy about the coat, on the other hand he attacked Woolsey atrociously on the score of his wig ; for though the latter went to the best makers, he never could get a peruke to sit naturally upon him ; and the unhappy epithet of Mr. Wiggins, applied to him on one occasion by the barber, stuck to him ever after in the club, and made him writhe when it was uttered. Each man would have quitted the Kidneys in disgust long since, but for the other,—for each had an attraction in the place, and dared not leave the field in possession of his rival.

To do Miss Morgiana justice, it must be said, that she did not encourage one more than another ; but as far as accepting eau de Cologne and hair-combs from the perfumer, —some opera tickets, a treat to Greenwich, and a piece of real Genoa velvet for a bonnet (it had originally been intended for a waistcoat), from the admiring tailor, she had been equally kind to each, and in return had made each a present of a lock of her beautiful glossy hair. It was all she had to give, poor girl ! and what could she do but gratify her admirers by this cheap and artless testimony of her regard ? A pretty scene and quarrel took place between the rivals on the day when they discovered that each was in possession of one of Morgiana's ringlets.

Such, then, were the owners and inmates of the little Bootjack, from whom and which, as this chapter is exceed-

ingly discursive and descriptive, we must separate the reader for a while, and carry him—it is only into Bond Street, so no gentleman need be afraid—carry him into Bond Street, where some other personages are awaiting his consideration.

Not far from Mr. Eglantine's shop in Bond Street stand, as is very well known, the Windsor Chambers. The West Diddlesex Association (Western Branch), the British and Foreign Soap Company, the celebrated attorneys Kite and Levison, have their respective offices here; and as the names of the other inhabitants of the chambers are not only painted on the walls, but also registered in Mrs. Boyle's *Court Guide*, it is quite unnecessary that they should be repeated here. Among them on the entresol (between the splendid saloons of the Soap Company on the first floor, with their statue of Britannia presenting a packet of the soap to Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, and the West Diddlesex Western Branch on the basement)—on the entresol—lives a gentleman by the name of Mr. Howard Walker. The brass plate on the door of that gentleman's chambers had the word 'Agency' inscribed beneath his name; and we are therefore at liberty to imagine that he followed that mysterious occupation. In person Mr. Walker was very genteel; he had large whiskers, dark eyes (with a slight cast in them), a cane, and a velvet waistcoat. He was a member of a club; had an admission to the opera, and knew every face behind the scenes; and was in the habit of using a number of French phrases in his conversation, having picked up a smattering of that language during a residence 'on the Continent'; in fact, he had found it very convenient at various times of his life to dwell in the city of Boulogne, where he acquired a knowledge of smoking, *écarté*, and billiards, which was afterwards of great service to him. He knew all the best tables in town, and the marker at Hunt's could only give him ten. He had some fashionable acquaintances too, and you might see him walking arm-in-arm with such gentlemen as my Lord Vauxhall, the Marquess of Billingsgate, or Captain Buff; and at the same time nodding to young Moses, the dandy bailiff; or Loder, the gambling-house keeper; or Aminadab, the cigar-seller in the Quadrant. Sometimes he wore a pair of moustachios, and was called Captain Walker, grounding his claim to that title upon the fact of having once held a commission in the service of her majesty the Queen of

Portugal. It scarcely need be said that he had been through the Insolvent Court many times. But to those who did not know his history intimately there was some difficulty in identifying him with the individual who had so taken the benefit of the law, inasmuch as in his schedule his name appeared as Hooker Walker, wine-merchant, commission-agent, music-seller, or what not. The fact is, that though he preferred to call himself Howard, Hooker was his Christian name, and it had been bestowed on him by his worthy old father, who was a clergyman, and had intended his son for that profession. But as the old gentleman died in York jail, where he was a prisoner for debt, he was never able to put his pious intentions with regard to his son into execution; and the young fellow (as he was wont with many oaths to assert) was thrown on his own resources, and became a man of the world at a very early age.

What Mr. Howard Walker's age was at the time of the commencement of this history, and, indeed, for an indefinite period before or afterwards, it is impossible to determine. If he were eight-and-twenty, as he asserted himself, Time had dealt hardly with him; his hair was thin, there were many crows' feet about his eyes, and other signs in his countenance of the progress of decay. If, on the contrary, he were forty, as Sam Snaffle declared, who himself had misfortunes in early life, and vowed he knew Mr. Walker in Whitecross Street prison in 1820, he was a very young-looking person considering his age. His figure was active and slim, his leg neat, and he had not in his whiskers a single white hair.

It must, however, be owned that he used Mr. Eglantine's Regenerative Uncction (which will make your whiskers as black as your boot), and, in fact, he was a pretty constant visitor at that gentleman's emporium; dealing with him largely for soaps and articles of perfumery, which he had at an exceedingly low rate. Indeed, he was never known to pay Mr. Eglantine one single shilling for those objects of luxury, and, having them on such moderate terms, was enabled to indulge in them pretty copiously. Thus Mr. Walker was almost as great a nosegay as Mr. Eglantine himself. His handkerchief was scented with verbena, his hair with jessamine, and his coat had usually a fine perfume of cigars, which rendered his presence in a small room almost instantaneously remarkable. I have described Mr. Walker thus

accurately, because, in truth, it is more with characters than with astounding events that this little history deals, and Mr. Walker is one of the principal of our *dramatis personae*.

And so, having introduced Mr. W., we will walk over with him to Mr. Eglantine's emporium, where that gentleman is in waiting, too, to have his likeness taken.

There is about an acre of plate glass under the royal arms on Mr. Eglantine's shop window ; and at night, when the gas is lighted, and the washballs are illuminated, and the lambent flame plays fitfully over numberless bottles of vari-coloured perfumes—now flashes on a case of razors, and now lightens up a crystal vase, containing a hundred thousand of his patent toothbrushes—the effect of the sight may be imagined. You don't suppose that he is a creature who has those odious, simpering wax figures in his window, that are called by the vulgar dummies ? He is above such a wretched artifice ; and it is my belief that he would as soon have his own head chopped off, and placed as a trunkless decoration to his shop-window, as allow a dummy to figure there. On one pane you read in elegant gold letters 'Eglantinia'—'tis his essence for the handkerchief ; on the other is written 'Regenerative Unction'—'tis his invaluable pomatum for the hair.

There is no doubt about it : Eglantine's knowledge of his profession amounts to genius. He sells a cake of soap for seven shillings, for which another man would not get a shilling, and his toothbrushes go off like wildfire at half a guinea apiece. If he has to administer rouge or pearl-powder to ladies, he does it with a mystery and fascination which there is no resisting, and the ladies believe there are no cosmetics like his. He gives his wares unheard-of names, and obtains for them sums equally prodigious. He *can* dress hair—that is a fact—as few men in this age can ; and has been known to take twenty pounds in a single night from as many of the first ladies of England when ringlets were in fashion. The introduction of bands, he says, made a difference of 2,000*l.* a year in his income ; and if there is one thing in the world he hates and despises, it is a Madonna. 'I'm not,' says he, 'a tradesman—I'm a *hartist* (Mr. Eglantine was born in London). I'm a hartist ; and show me a fine 'ead of 'air, and I'll dress it for nothink.' He vows that it was his way of dressing Mademoiselle Sontag's hair, that caused the count her husband to fall in love with her ; and

he has a lock of it in a brooch, and says it was the finest head he ever saw, except one, and that was Morgiana Crump's.

With his genius and his position in the profession, how comes it, then, that Mr. Eglantine was not a man of fortune, as many a less clever has been? If the truth must be told, he loved pleasure, and was in the hands of the Jews. He had been in business twenty years: he had borrowed a thousand pounds to purchase his stock and shop; and he calculated that he had paid upwards of twenty thousand pounds for the use of the one thousand, which was still as much due as on the first day when he entered business. He could show that he had received a thousand dozen of champagne from the disinterested money-dealers with whom he usually negotiated his paper. He had pictures all over his 'studios,' which had been purchased in the same bargains. If he sold his goods at an enormous price, he paid for them at a rate almost equally exorbitant. There was not an article in his shop but came to him through his Israelite providers; and in the very front shop itself sat a gentleman who was the nominee of one of them, and who was called Mr. Mossrose. He was there to superintend the cash account, and to see that certain instalments were paid to his principals, according to certain agreements entered into between Mr. Eglantine and them.

Having that sort of opinion of Mr. Mossrose which Damocles may have had of the sword which hung over his head, of course Mr. Eglantine hated his foreman profoundly. 'He an artist,' would the former gentleman exclaim, 'why he's only a disguised bailiff! Mossrose, indeed! the chap's name's Amos, and he sold oranges before he came here.' Mr. Mossrose, on his side, utterly despised Mr. Eglantine, and looked forward to the day when he would become the proprietor of the shop, and take Eglantine for a foreman, and then it would be *his* turn to sneer and bully, and ride the high horse.

Thus it will be seen that there was a skeleton in the great perfumer's house, as the saying is, a worm in his heart's core, and though, to all appearance prosperous, he was really in an awkward position.

What Mr. Eglantine's relations were with Mr. Walker may be imagined from the following dialogue which took place between the two gentlemen at five o'clock one summer's

afternoon, when Mr. Walker, issuing from his chambers, came across to the perfumer's shop.

'Is Eglantine at home, Mr. Mossrose?' said Walker to the foreman, who sat in the front shop.

'Don't know—go and look' (meaning go and be hanged); for Mossrose also hated Mr. Walker.

'If you're uncivil I'll break your bones, Mr. Amos,' says Mr. Walker, sternly.

'I should like to see you try, Mr. Hooker Walker,' replies the undaunted shopman, on which the captain, looking several tremendous canings at him, walked into the back room or 'studio.'

'How are you, Tiny, my buck?' says the captain. 'Much doing?'

'Not a soul in town. I 'aven't touched the hiron's all day,' replied Mr. Eglantine, in rather a desponding way.

'Well, just get them ready now, and give my whiskers a turn. I'm going to dine with Billingsgate and some out-and-out fellows at the Regent, and so, my lad, just do your best.'

'I can't,' says Mr. Eglantine. 'I expect ladies, captain, every minute.'

'Very good; I don't want to trouble such a great man, I'm sure. Good-bye, and let me hear from you *this day week*, Mr. Eglantine.' 'This day week' meant that at seven days from that time a certain bill accepted by Mr. Eglantine would be due, and presented for payment.

'Don't be in such a hurry, Captain—do sit down. I'll curl you in one minute. And, I say, won't the party renew?'

'Impossible—it's the third renewal.'

'But I'll make the thing handsome to you;—indeed I will.'

'How much?'

'Will ten pounds do the business?'

'What! offer my principal ten pounds? Are you mad, Eglantine?—A little more of the iron to the left whisker.'

'No, I meant for commission.'

'Well, I'll see if that will do. The party I deal with, Eglantine, has power, I know, and can defer the matter, no doubt. As for me, you know, *I've* nothing to do in the affair, and only act as a friend between you and him. I give you my honour and soul, I do.'

'I know you do, my dear sir.' The two last speeches

were lies. The perfumer knew perfectly well that Mr. Walker would pocket the 10*l.* ; but he was too easy to care for paying it, and too timid to quarrel with such a powerful friend. And he had on three different occasions already paid 10*l.* fine for the renewal of the bill in question, all of which bonuses he knew went to his friend Mr. Walker.

Here, too, the reader will perceive what was, in part, the meaning of the word 'agency' on Mr. Walker's door. He was a go-between between money-lenders and borrowers in this world, and certain small sums always remained with him in the course of the transaction. He was an agent for wine, too ; an agent for places to be had through the influence of great men ; he was an agent for half a dozen theatrical people, male and female, and had the interests of the latter, especially, it was said, at heart. Such were a few of the means by which this worthy gentleman contrived to support himself, and if, as he was fond of high living, gambling, and pleasures of all kinds, his revenue was not large enough for his expenditure—why, he got into debt, and settled his bills that way. He was as much at home in the Fleet as in Pall Mall, and quite as happy in the one place as in the other. 'That's the way I take things,' would this philosopher say. 'If I've money, I spend ; if I've credit, I borrow ; if I'm dunned, I whitewash ; and so you can't beat me down.' Happy elasticity of temperament ! I do believe that in spite of his misfortunes and precarious position, there was no man in England whose conscience was more calm, and whose slumbers were more tranquil than those of Captain Howard Walker.

As he was sitting under the hands of Mr. Eglantine, he reverted to 'the ladies,' whom the latter gentleman professed to expect ; said he was a sly dog, a lucky ditto, and asked him if the ladies were handsome.

Eglantine thought there could be no harm in telling a bouncer to a gentleman with whom he was engaged in money transactions ; and so, to give the captain an idea of his solvency and the brilliancy of his future prospects, 'Captain,' said he, 'I've got a hundred and eighty pounds out with you, which you were obliging enough to negotiate for me. Have I, or have I not, two bills out to that amount ?'

'Well, my good fellow, you certainly have ; and what then ?'

'What then ? Why, I bet you five pounds to one, that in three months those bills are paid.'

'Done; five pounds to one. I take it.'

This sudden closing with him made the perfumer rather uneasy, but he was not to pay for three months, and so he said 'done' too, and went on, 'What would you say if your bills were paid?'

'Not mine; Pike's.'

'Well, if Pike's were paid; and the Minories' man paid, and every single liability I have cleared off; and that Mossrose flung out of winder, and me and my emporium as free as hair?'

'You don't say so? Is Queen Anne dead? and has she left you a fortune? or what's the luck in the wind now?'

'It's better than Queen Anne, or anybody dying. What should you say to seeing in that very place where Mossrose now sits (hang him!)—in seeing the *finest head of 'air now in Europe?* A woman I tell you—a slap-up lovely woman, who, I'm proud to say, will soon be called Mrs. Heglantine, and will bring me five thousand pounds to her fortune.'

'Well, Tiny, this *is* good luck, indeed. I say, you'll be able to do a bill or two for *me* then, hay? You won't forget an old friend?'

'That I won't. I shall have a place at my board for you, capting; and many's the time I shall 'ope to see you under that ma'ogany.'

'What will the French milliner say? She'll hang herself for despair, Eglantine.'

'Hush! not a word about 'er. I've sown all my wild oats, I tell you. Eglantine is no longer the gay young bachelor, but the sober married man. I want a heart to share the feelings of mine. I want repose. I'm not so young as I was, I feel it.'

'Pooh, pooh! you are—you are——'

'Well, but I sigh for an 'appy fireside; and I'll have it.'

'And give up that club which you belong to, hay?'

'The Kidneys? Oh! of course, no married man should belong to such places, at least, I'll not; and I'll have my kidneys broiled at home. But be quiet, captain, if you please; the ladies appointed to——'

'And is it *the* lady you expect? eh, you rogue!'

'Well, get along. It's her and her ma.'

But Mr. Walker determined he wouldn't get along, and would see these lovely ladies before he stirred.

The operation on Mr. Walker's whiskers being concluded,

he was arranging his toilet before the glass in an agreeable attitude, his neck out; his enormous pin settled in his stock to his satisfaction, his eyes complacently directed towards the reflection of his left and favourite whisker, and Eglantine was laid on a settee in an easy, though melancholy posture. He was twiddling the tongs with which he had just operated on Walker with one hand, and his right-hand ringlet with the other, and he was thinking—thinking of Morgiana; and then of the bill which was to become due on the 16th; and then of a light blue velvet waistcoat with gold sprigs, in which he looked very killing, and so was trudging round in his little circle of loves, fears, and vanities. ‘Hang it!’ Mr. Walker was thinking, ‘I am a handsome man. A pair of whiskers like mine are not met with every day. If anybody can see that my tuft is dyed, may I be——’ When the door was flung open, and a large lady with a curl on her forehead, yellow shawl, a green velvet bonnet with feathers, half-boots, and a drab gown with tulips and other large exotics painted on it—when, in a word, Mrs. Crump and her daughter bounced into the room.

‘Here we are, Mr. E.,’ cries Mrs. Crump, in a gay, *folâtre*, confidential air. ‘But, law! there’s a gent in the room!’

‘Don’t mind me, ladies,’ said the gent alluded to, with his fascinating way. ‘I’m a friend of Eglantine’s; ain’t I, Egg? a chip of the old block, hay?’

‘That you are,’ said the perfumer, starting up.

‘An airdresser?’ asked Mrs. Crump. ‘Well, I thought he was; there’s something, Mr. E., in gentlemen of your profession so exceeding, so uncommon *distanty*.’

‘Madam, you do me proud,’ replied the gentleman so complimented, with great presence of mind. ‘Will you allow me to try my skill upon you, or upon miss, your lovely daughter? I’m not so clever as Eglantine, but no bad hand, I assure you.’

‘Nonsense, captain,’ interrupted the perfumer, who was uncomfortable somehow at the rencontre between the captain and the object of his affection. ‘He’s not in the profession, Mrs. C. This is my friend Captain Walker, and proud I am to call him my friend.’ And then aside to Mrs. C., ‘One of the first swells on town, ma’am—a regular tip-topper.’

Humouring the mistake which Mrs. Crump had just made, Mr. Walker thrust the curling-irons into the fire

in a minute, and looked round at the ladies with such a fascinating grace, that both, now made acquainted with his quality, blushed and giggled, and were quite pleased. Mamma looked at 'Gina, and 'Gina looked at mamma; and then mamma gave 'Gina a little blow in the region of her little waist, and then both burst out laughing, as ladies will laugh, and as, let us trust, they *may* laugh for ever and ever. Why need there be a reason for laughing? Let us laugh when we are laughy, as we sleep when we are sleepy. And so Mrs. Crump and her demoiselle laughed to their heart's content; and both fixed their large shining black eyes repeatedly on Mr. Walker.

'I won't leave the room,' said he, coming forward with the heated iron in his hand, and smoothing it on the brown paper with all the dexterity of a professor (for the fact is Mr. W. every morning curled his own immense whiskers with the greatest skill and care)—'I won't leave the room, Eglantine, my boy. My lady here took me for a hair-dresser, and so, you know, I've a right to stay.'

'He can't stay,' said Mrs. Crump, all of a sudden, blushing as red as a peony.

'I shall have on my peignoir, mamma,' said miss, looking at the gentleman, and then dropping down her eyes and blushing too.

'But he can't stay, 'Gina, I tell you; do you think that I would, before a gentleman, take off my—'

'Mamma means her FRONT!' said miss, jumping up, and beginning to laugh with all her might; at which the honest landlady of the Bootjack, who loved a joke, although at her own expense, laughed too, and said that no one, except Mr. Crump and Mr. Eglantine, had ever seen her without the ornament in question.

'Do go now, you provoking thing, you!' continued Miss C. to Mr. Walker; 'I wish to hear the hoverture, and it's six o'clock now, and we shall never be done against then:' but the way in which Morgiana said '*do go*,' clearly indicated 'don't,' to the perspicuous mind of Mr. Walker.

'Perhaps you 'ad better go,' continued Mr. Eglantine, joining in this sentiment, and being, in truth, somewhat uneasy at the admiration which his 'swell friend' excited.

'I'll see you hanged first, Eggy, my boy! Go I won't, until these ladies have had their hair dressed: didn't you yourself tell me that Miss Crump's, was the most beautiful

hair in Europe? And do you think that I'll go away without seeing it? No, here I stay.'

'You naughty, wicked, odious, provoking man!' said Miss Crump. But, at the same time, she took off her bonnet, and placed it on one of the side candlesticks of Mr. Eglantine's glass (it was a black velvet bonnet, trimmed with sham lace, and with a wreath of nasturtiums, convolvuluses, and wallflowers within); and then said, 'Give me the peignoir, Mr. Archibald, if you please;' and Eglantine, who would do anything for her when she called him Archibald, immediately produced that garment, and wrapped round the delicate shoulders of the lady, who removing a sham gold chain which she wore on her forehead, two brass hair-combs set with glass rubies, and the comb which kept her back hair together, removing them, I say, and turning her great eyes towards the stranger, and giving her head a shake, down let tumble such a flood of shining, waving, heavy, glossy, jetty hair, as would have done Mr. Rowland's heart good to see. It tumbled down Miss Morgiana's back, and it tumbled over her shoulders, it tumbled over the chair on which she sat, and from the midst of it her jolly, bright-eyed, rosy face beamed out with a triumphant smile, which said, 'Ain't I now the most angelic being you ever saw?'

'By Heavens! it's the most beautiful thing I ever saw!' cried Mr. Walker, with undisguised admiration.

'Isn't it?' said Mrs. Crump, who made her daughter's triumph her own. 'Heigho! when I acted at the Wells in 1820, before that dear girl was born, I had such a head of hair as that, to a shade, sir, to a shade. They called me Ravenswing on account of it. I lost my head of hair when that dear child was born, and I often say to her, "Morgiana, you came into the world to rob your mother of her 'air." Were you ever at the Wells, sir, in 1820? Perhaps you recollect Miss Delancy? I am that Miss Delancy. Perhaps you recollect,—

'Tink-a-tink, tink-a-tink:

By the light of the star,
On the blue river's brink,
I heard a guitar.

'I heard a guitar

On the blue waters clear,
And knew by its mu-u-sic
That Selim was near!

You remember that in the *Bagdad Bells*? Fatima, Delancy; Selim, Benlomond (his real name was Bunnion; and he failed, poor fellow, in the public line afterwards). It was done to the tambourine, and dancing between each verse,—

‘Tink-a-tink, tink-a-tink,
How the soft music swells,
And I hear the soft clink
Of the minaret bells!

‘Tink-a—’

‘Oh!’ here cried Miss Crump, as if in exceeding pain (and whether Mr. Eglantine had twitched, pulled, or hurt any one individual hair of that lovely head I don’t know),—
‘Oh, you are killing me, Mr. Eglantine!’

And with this mamma, who was in her attitude, holding up the end of her boa as a visionary tambourine, and Mr. Walker, who was looking at her, and in his amusement at the mother’s performances had almost forgotten the charms of the daughter,—both turned round at once, and looked at her with many expressions of sympathy, while Eglantine, in a voice of reproach, said, ‘*Killed* you, Morgiana! I kill *you*?’

‘I’m better now,’ said the young lady, with a smile,—
‘I’m better, Mr. Archibald, now.’ And if the truth must be told, no greater coquette than Miss Morgiana existed in all Mayfair,—no, not among the most fashionable mistresses of the fashionable valets who frequented the Bootjack. She believed herself to be the most fascinating creature that the world ever produced; she never saw a stranger but she tried these fascinations upon him; and her charms of manner and person were of that showy sort which is most popular in this world, where people are wont to admire most that which gives them the least trouble to see; and so you will find a tulip of a woman to be in fashion when a little humble violet or daisy of creation is passed over without remark. Morgiana was a tulip among women, and the tulip-fanciers all came flocking round her.

Well, she said ‘Oh!’ and ‘I’m better now, Mr. Archibald,’ thereby succeeded in drawing everybody’s attention to her lovely self. By the latter words Mr. Eglantine was specially inflamed; he glanced at Mr. Walker, and said, ‘Capting! didn’t I tell you she was a *creecher*? See her hair, sir,

it's as black and as glossy as satting. It weighs fifteen pound that hair, sir; and I wouldn't let my apprentice—that blundering Mossrose, for instance (hang him!)—I wouldn't let any one but myself dress that hair for five hundred guineas! Ah, Miss Morgiana, remember that you *may always* have Eglantine to dress your hair!—remember that, that's all.' And with this the worthy gentleman began rubbing delicately a little of the Eglantina into those ambrosial locks, which he loved with all the love of a man and an artist.

And as for Morgiana showing her hair, I hope none of my readers will entertain a bad opinion of the poor girl for doing so. Her locks were her pride; she acted at the private theatre hair parts, where she could appear on purpose to show them in a dishevelled state; and that her modesty was real and not affected may be proved by the fact that when Mr. Walker, stepping up in the midst of Eglantine's last speech, took hold of a lock of her hair very gently with his hand, she cried 'Oh!' and started with all her might. And Mr. Eglantine observed very gravely, 'Capt'ing! Miss Crump's hair is to be seen and not to be touched, if you please.'

'No more it is, Mr. Eglantine,' said her mamma; 'and now as it's come to my turn, I beg the gentleman will be so obliging as to go.'

'*Must I?*' cried Mr. Walker; and as it was half-past six, and he was engaged to dinner at the Regent Club, and as he did not wish to make Eglantine jealous, who evidently was annoyed by his staying, he took his hat just as Miss Crump's coiffure was completed, and saluting her and her mamma, left the room.

'A tip-top swell, I can assure you,' said Eglantine, nodding after him: 'a regular bang-up chap, and no *mistake*. Intimate with the Marquess of Billingsgate, and Lord Vauxhall, and that set.'

'He's very genteel,' said Mrs. Crump.

'Law! I'm sure I think nothing of him,' said Morgiana.

And Captain Walker walked towards his club, meditating on the beauties of Morgiana. 'What hair,' said he, 'what eyes the girl has! they're as big as billiard balls; and 5,000*l*. Eglantine's in luck: 5,000*l*.—she can't have it, it's impossible!'

No sooner was Mrs. Crump's front arranged, during the

time of which operation Morgiana sat in perfect contentment looking at the last French fashions in the *Courrier des Dames*, and thinking how her pink satin slip would dye, and make just such a mantilla as that represented in the engraving,—no sooner was Mrs. Crump's front arranged, than both ladies, taking leave of Mr. Eglantine, tripped back to the Bootjack Hotel in the neighbourhood, where a very neat green fly was already in waiting, the gentleman on the box of which (from a livery-stable in the neighbourhood) gave a knowing touch to his hat, and a salute with his whip, to the two ladies, as they entered the tavern.

'Mr. W.'s inside,' said the man, a driver from Mr. Snaffle's establishment; 'he's been in and out this score of times, and looking down the street for you.' And in the house, in fact, was Mr. Woolsey, the tailor, who had hired the fly and was engaged to conduct the ladies that evening to the play.

It was really rather too bad to think that Miss Morgiana, after going to one lover to have her hair dressed, should go with another to the play; but such is the way with lovely woman! Let her have a dozen admirers, and the dear coquette will exercise her power upon them all: and as a lady, when she has a large wardrobe, and a taste for variety in dress, will appear every day in a different costume, so will the young and giddy beauty wear her lovers, encouraging now the black whiskers, now smiling on the brown, now thinking that the gay smiling rattle of an admirer becomes her very well, and now adopting the sad sentimental melancholy one, according as her changeful fancy prompts her. Let us not be too angry with these uncertainties and caprices of beauty, and depend on it that, for the most part, those females who cry out loudest against the flightiness of their sisters, and rebuke their undue encouragement of this man or that, would do as much themselves if they had the chance, and are constant, as I am to my coat just now, because I have no other.

'Did you see Doubleyou, 'Gina dear?' said her mamma, addressing that young lady. 'He's in the bar with your pa, and has his military coat with the king's button, and looks like an officer.'

This was Mr. Woolsey's style, his great aim being to look like an army gent, for many of whom he in his capacity of tailor made those splendid red and blue coats which characterize our military. As for the royal button, had

not he made a set of coats for his late majesty, George IV ? and he would add, when he narrated this circumstance, 'Sir, Prince Blucher and Prince Swartzenberg's measure's in the house now ; and what's more, I've cut for Wellington.' I believe he would have gone to St. Helena to make a coat for Napoleon, so great was his ardour. He wore a blue black wig, and his whiskers were of the same hue. He was brief and stern in conversation ; and he always went to masquerades and balls in a field-marshal's uniform.

'He looks really quite the thing to-night,' continued Mrs. Crump.

'Yes,' said 'Gina ; 'but he's such an odious wig, and the dye of his whiskers always comes off on his white gloves.'

'Everybody has not their own hair, love,' continued Mrs. Crump with a sigh ; 'but Eglantine's is beautiful.'

'Every hairdresser's is,' answered Morgiana, rather contemptuously ; 'but what I can't bear is, that their fingers is always so very fat and pudgy.'

In fact, something had gone wrong with the fair Morgiana. Was it that she had but little liking for the one pretender or the other ? Was it that young Glauber, who acted Romeo in the private theatricals, was far younger and more agreeable than either ? Or was it, that seeing a *real gentleman*, such as Mr. Walker, with whom she had had her first interview, she felt more and more the want of refinement in her other declared admirers ? Certain, however, it is, that she was very reserved all the evening, in spite of the attentions of Mr. Woolsey ; that she repeatedly looked round at the box-door, as if she expected some one to enter ; and that she partook of only a very few oysters, indeed, out of the barrel which the gallant tailor had sent down to the Bootjack, and off which the party supped.

'What is it ?' said Mr. Woolsey to his ally, Crump, as they sat together after the retirement of the ladies. 'She was dumb all night. She never once laughed at the farce, nor cried at the tragedy, and you know she laughs and cries uncommon. She only took half her negus, and not above a quarter of her beer.'

'No more she did !' replied Mr. Crump, very calmly. 'I think it must be the barber as has been captivating her : he dressed her hair for the play.'

'Hang him, I'll shoot him !' said Mr. Woolsey. 'A fat, foolish, effeminate beast like that marry Miss Morgiana ?

Never ! I *will* shoot him. I'll provoke him next Saturday—I'll tread on his toe—I'll pull his nose !'

'No quarrelling at the Kidneys !' answered Crump, sternly ; 'there shall be no quarrelling in that room as long as *I'm* in the chair !'

'Well, at any rate you'll stand my friend ?'

'You know I will,' answered the other. 'You are honourable, and I like you better than Eglantine. I trust you more than Eglantine, sir. You're more of a man than Eglantine, though you *are* a tailor ; and I wish with all my heart you may get Morgiana. Mrs. C. goes the other way, I know : but I tell you what, women will go their own ways, sir, and Morgy's like her mother in this point, and, depend upon it, Morgy will decide for herself.'

Mr. Woolsey presently went home, still persisting in his plan for the assassination of Eglantine. Mr. Crump went to bed very quietly, and snored through the night in his usual tone. Mr. Eglantine passed some feverish moments of jealousy, for he had come down to the club in the evening, and had heard that Morgiana was gone to the play with his rival. And Miss Morgiana dreamed of a man, who was,—must we say it ?—exceedingly like Captain Howard Walker. 'Mrs. Captain So-and-so !' thought she. 'Oh, I do love a gentleman dearly !'

And about this time, too, Mr. Walker himself came rolling home from the Regent, hiccapping, 'Such hair !—such eyebrows !—such eyes ! like b-b-billiard-balls, by Jove !'

CHAPTER II

IN WHICH MR. WALKER MAKES THREE ATTEMPTS TO ASCERTAIN THE DWELLING OF MORGIANA

THE day after the dinner at the Regent Club, Mr. Walker stepped over to the shop of his friend the perfumer, where, as usual, the young man, Mr. Mossrose, was established in the front premises.

For some reason or other, the captain was particularly good-humoured ; and, quite forgetful of the words which had passed between him and Mr. Eglantine's lieutenant the day before, began addressing the latter with extreme cordiality.

'A good morning to you, Mr. Mossrose,' said Captain Walker. 'Why, sir, you look as fresh as your namesake, —you do, indeed, now, Mossrose.'

'You look ash yellow ash a guinea,' responded Mr. Mossrose, sulkily. He thought the captain was hoaxing him.

'My good sir,' replies the other, nothing cast down, 'I drank rather too freely last night.'

'The more beast you!' said Mr. Mossrose.

'Thank you, Mossrose; the same to you,' answered the captain.

'If you call me a beast I'll punch your head off!' answered the young man, who had much skill in the art which many of his brethren practise.

'I didn't, my fine fellow,' replied Walker; 'on the contrary, you—'

'Do you mean to give me the lie?' broke out the indignant Mossrose, who hated the agent fiercely, and did not in the least care to conceal his hate.

In fact, it was his fixed purpose to pick a quarrel with Walker, and to drive him, if possible, from Mr. Eglantine's shop. 'Do you mean to give me the lie, I say, Mr. Hooker Walker?'

'For Heaven's sake, Amos, hold your tongue!' exclaimed the captain, to whom the name of Hooker was as poison; but at this moment, a customer stepping in, Mr. Amos exchanged his ferocious aspect for a bland grin, and Mr. Walker walked into the studio.

When in Mr. Eglantine's presence, Walker, too, was all smiles in a minute, sunk down on a settee, held out his hand to the perfumer, and began confidentially discoursing with him.

'Such a dinner, Tiny, my boy,' said he; 'such prime fellows to eat it, too! Billingsgate, Vauxhall, Cinqbars, Buff of the Blues, and half a dozen more of the best fellows in town. And what do you think the dinner cost a-head? I'll wager you'll never guess.'

'Was it two guineas a-head?—In course I mean without wine,' said the genteel perfumer.

'Guess again!'

'Well, was it ten guineas a-head? I'll guess any sum you please,' replied Mr. Eglantine; 'for I know that when you *nobs* are together, you don't spare your money. I, myself, at the Star and Garter at Richmond, once paid ——'

‘Eighteenpence?’

‘Heightenpence, sir?—I paid five-and-thirty shillings per head. I’d have you to know that I can act as a gentleman as well as any other gentleman, sir,’ answered the perfumer with much dignity.

‘Well, eighteenpence was what *we* paid, and not a rap more, upon my honour.’

‘Nonsense, you’re joking. The Marquess of Billingsgate dine for eighteenpence? Why, hang it, if I was a marquess, I’d pay a five-pound note for my lunch.’

‘You little know the person, Master Eglantine,’ replied the captain, with a smile of contemptuous superiority; ‘you little know the real man of fashion, my good fellow. Simplicity, sir,—simplicity’s the characteristic of the real gentleman, and so I’ll tell you what we had for dinner.’

‘Turtle and venison, of course;—no nob dines without *them*.’

‘Psha! we’re sick of ’em! We had pea-soup and boiled tripe! What do you think of *that*? We had sprats and herrings, a bullock’s heart, a baked shoulder of mutton and potatoes, pig’s fry and Irish stew. I ordered the dinner, sir, and got more credit for inventing it than they ever gave to Ude or Soyer. The marquess was in ecstasies, the earl devoured half a bushel of sprats, and if the viscount is not laid up with a surfeit of bullock’s heart, my name’s not Howard Walker. Billy, as I call him, was in the chair, and gave my health; and what do you think the rascal proposed?’

‘What *did* his lordship propose?’

‘That every man present should subscribe twopence, and pay for my share of the dinner. By Jove! it is true, and the money was handed to me in a pewter-pot, of which they also begged to make me a present. We afterwards went to Tom Spring’s, from Tom’s to the Finish, from the Finish to the watchhouse—that is, *they* did,—and sent for me, just as I was getting into bed, to bail them all out.’

‘They’re happy dogs, those young noblemen,’ said Mr. Eglantine; ‘nothing but pleasure from morning till night; no affectation, neither,—no *hoture*; but manly, downright, straightforward good fellows.’

‘Should you like to meet them, Tiny, my boy?’ said the captain.

'If I did, sir, I hope I should show myself to be the gentleman,' answered Mr. Eglantine.

'Well, you *shall* meet them, and Lady Billingsgate shall order her perfumes at your shop. We are going to dine, next week, all our set, at Mealy-faced Bob's, and you shall be my guest,' cried the captain, slapping the delighted artist on the back. 'And now, my boy, tell me how *you* spent the evening.'

'At my club, sir,' answered Mr. Eglantine, blushing rather.

'What, not at the play with the lovely black-eyed Miss—what is her name, Eglantine?'

'Never mind her name, captain,' replied Eglantine, partly from prudence and partly from shame. He had not the heart to own it was Crump, and he did not care that the captain should know more of his destined bride.

'You wish to keep the five thousand to yourself, eh! you rogue?' responded the captain, with a good-humoured air, although exceedingly mortified; for, to say the truth, he had put himself to the trouble of telling the above long story of the dinner, and of promising to introduce Eglantine to the lords, solely that he might elicit from that gentleman's good humour some further particulars regarding the young lady with the billiard-ball eyes. It was for the very same reason, too, that he had made the attempt at reconciliation with Mr. Mossrose, which had just so signally failed. Nor would the reader, did he know Mr. W. better, at all require to have the above explanation; but as yet we are only at the first chapter of his history, and who is to know what the hero's motives can be unless we take the trouble to explain?

Well, the little dignified answer of the worthy dealer in bergamot, '*Never mind her name, captain!*' threw the gallant captain quite back; and though he sat for a quarter of an hour longer, and was exceedingly kind; and though he threw out some skilful hints, yet the perfumer was quite unconquerable; or, rather, he was too frightened to tell; the poor, fat, timid, easy, good-natured gentleman was always the prey of rogues,—panting and floundering in one rascal's snare or another's. He had the dissimulation, too, which timid men have; and felt the presence of a victimizer as a hare does of a greyhound. Now he would be quite still, now he would double, and now he would run, and then came the end. He knew, by his sure instinct of

fear, that the captain had, in asking these questions, a scheme against him, and so he was cautious, and trembled, and doubted. And oh ! how he thanked his stars when Lady Grogmore's chariot drove up, with the Misses Grogmore, who wanted their hair dressed, and were going to a breakfast at three o'clock !

'I'll look in again, Tiny,' said the captain, on hearing the summons.

'Do, captain,' replied the other : '*thank you ;*' and went into the lady's studio with a heavy heart.

'Get out of the way, you infernal villain !' roared the captain, with many oaths, to Lady Grogmore's large footman, with ruby-coloured tights, who was standing inhaling the ten thousand perfumes of the shop ; and the latter, moving away in great terror, the gallant agent passed out, quite heedless of the grin of Mr. Mossrose.

Walker was in a fury at his want of success, and walked down Bond Street in a fury. '*I will* know where the girl lives !' swore he. 'I'll spend a five-pound note, by Jove ! rather than not know where she lives !'

'*That you would—I know you would !*' said a little, grave, low voice, all of a sudden, by his side. 'Pooh ! what's money to you ?'

Walker looked down ; it was Tom Dale.

Who in London did not know little Tom Dale ? He had cheeks like an apple, and his hair curled every morning, and a little blue stock, and always two new magazines under his arm, and an umbrella and a little brown frock-coat, and big square-toed shoes with which he went *papping* down the street. He was everywhere at once. Everybody met him every day, and he knew everything that everybody ever did ; though nobody ever knew what *he* did. He was, they say, a hundred years old, and had never dined at his own charge once in those hundred years. He looked like a figure out of a waxwork, with glassy, clear, meaningless eyes ; he always spoke with a grin ; he knew what you had had for dinner the day before he met you, and what everybody had for dinner for a century back almost. He was the receptacle of all the scandal of all the world, from Bond Street to Bread Street ; he knew all the authors, all the actors, all the 'notorieties' of the town, and the private histories of each. That is, he never knew anything really, but supplied deficiencies of truth and memory, with ready-

coined, never-failing lies. He was the most benevolent man in the universe, and never saw you without telling you everything most cruel of your neighbour, and when he left you he went to do the same kind turn by yourself.

'Pooh! what's money to you, my dear boy?' said little Tom Dale, who had just come out of Ebers's, where he had been filching an opera ticket. 'You make it in bushels in the city, you know you do,—in thousands. *I* saw you go into Eglantine's. Fine business that; finest in London. Five-shilling cakes of soap, my dear boy. *I* can't wash with such; thousands a-year that man has made—hasn't he?'

'Upon my word, Tom, I don't know,' says the captain.

'*You* not know? Don't tell me. You know everything—you agents. You *know* he makes five thousand a-year,—aye, and might make ten, but you know why he don't.'

'Indeed I don't.'

'Nonsense. Don't humbug a poor old fellow like me. Jews—Amos—fifty per cent, eh? Why can't he get his money from a good Christian?'

'I *have* heard something of that sort,' said Walker, laughing. 'Why, by Jove, Tom, you know everything!'

'*You* know everything, my dear boy. You know what a rascally trick that opera creature served him, poor fellow. Cashmere shawls—Storr and Mortimer's—Star and Garter. Much better dine quiet off pea-soup and sprats,—ay? His betters have, as you know very well.'

'Pea-soup and sprats! What have you heard of that already?'

'Who bailed Lord Billingsgate, eh, you rogue?' and here Tom gave a knowing and almost demoniacal grin. 'Who wouldn't go to the Finish? Who had the piece of plate presented to him filled with sovereigns? And you deserved it, my dear boy—you deserved it. They said it was only halfpence, but *I* know better!' and here Tom went off in a cough.

'I say, Tom,' cried Walker, inspired with a sudden thought, 'you, who know everything, and are a theatrical man, did you ever know a Miss Delancy, an actress?'

'At Sadler's Wells in '16? Of course I did. Real name was Budge. Lord Slapper admired her very much, my dear boy. She married a man by the name of Crump, his lordship's black footman, and brought him five thousand

pounds; and they keep the Bootjack public-house in Bunker's Buildings, and they've got fourteen children. Is one of them handsome, eh, you sly rogue,—and is it that which you will give five pounds to know? God bless you, my dear, dear boy. Jones, my dear friend, how are you?’

And now, seizing on Jones, Tom Dale left Mr. Walker alone, and proceeded to pour into Mr. Jones's ear an account of the individual whom he had just quitted; how he was the best fellow in the world, and Jones *knew* it; how he was in a fine way of making his fortune; how he had been in the Fleet many times, and how he was at this moment employed in looking out for a young lady of whom a certain great marquess (whom Jones knew very well, too) had expressed an admiration.

But for these observations, which he did not hear, Captain Walker, it may be pronounced, did not care. His eyes brightened up, he marched quickly and gaily away; and turning into his own chambers opposite Eglantine's shop, saluted that establishment with a grin of triumph. ‘You wouldn't tell me her name, wouldn't you?’ said Mr. Walker. ‘Well, the luck's with me now, and here goes.’

Two days after as Mr. Eglantine, with white gloves and a case of eau de Cologne as a present in his pocket, arrived at the Bootjack Hotel, Little Bunker's Buildings, Berkeley Square (for it must out—that was the place in which Mr. Crump's inn was situated), he paused for a moment at the threshold of the little house of entertainment and listened, with beating heart, to the sound of delicious music that a well-known voice was uttering within.

The moon was playing in silvery brightness down the gutter of the humble street. A ‘helper,’ rubbing down one of Lady Smigsmag's carriage horses, even paused in his whistle to listen to the strain. Mr. Tressle's man, who had been professionally occupied, ceased his tap-tap upon the coffin which he was getting in readiness. The greengrocer (there is always a greengrocer in those narrow streets, and he goes out in white Berlin gloves as a supernumerary footman) was standing charmed at his little green gate; the cobbler (there is always a cobbler, too) was drunk, as usual, of evenings, but, with unusual subordination, never sang except when the *refrain* of the ditty arrived, when he hiccupped it forth with tipsy loyalty; and Eglantine leaned

against the Chequers painted on the door-side under the name of Crump, and looked at the red illumined curtain of the bar, and the vast, well-known shadow of Mrs. Crump's turban within. Now and again the shadow of that worthy matron's hand would be seen to grasp the shadow of a bottle; then the shadow of a cup would rise towards the turban, and still the strain proceeded. Eglantine, I say, took out his yellow bandanna, and brushed the beady drops from his brow, and laid the contents of his white kids on his heart, and sighed with ecstatic sympathy. The song began,—

Come to the greenwood tree,¹
 Come where the dark woods be,
 Dearest, oh come with me!
 Let us rove—oh my love—oh my love!
Oh my-y love!

(Drunken Cobbler without), Oh my-y love!

‘Beast!’ says Eglantine.

Come—’tis the moonlight hour,
 Dew is on leaf and flower,
 Come to the linden bower,—
 Let us rove—oh my love—oh my love!
 Let us ro-o-ove, lurlurliety; yes, we’ll rove, lurlurliety,
 Through the gro-o-ove, lurlurliety—lurlurli-e-i-e-i-e-i!
(Cobbler as usual), Let us ro-o-ove, &c.

‘You here?’ says another individual, coming clinking up the street, in a military cut dress-coat, the buttons whereof shone very bright in the moonlight. ‘You here, Eglantine?—You’re always here.’

‘Hush, Woolsey,’ said Mr. Eglantine to his rival the tailor (for he was the individual in question); and Woolsey, accordingly, put his back against the opposite door-post and Chequers, so that (with poor Eglantine’s bulk) nothing much thicker than a sheet of paper could pass out or in. And thus these two amorous Caryatides kept guard as the song continued:—

Dark is the wood, and wide,
 Dangers, they say, betide;
 But, at my Albert’s side,
 Nought I fear, oh my love—oh my love!

¹ The words of this song are copyright, nor will the copyright be sold for less than twopence-halfpenny.

Welcome the greenwood tree,
Welcome the forest free,
Dearest with thee, with thee,
Nought I fear, oh my love—o-h ma-a-y love !

Eglantine's fine eyes were filled with tears as Morgiana passionately uttered the above beautiful words. Little Woolsey's eyes glistened, as he clenched his fist with an oath, and said, 'Show me any singing that can beat *that*. Cobbler, shut your mouth, or I'll break your head !'

But the cobbler, regardless of the threat, continued to perform the 'Lurlurliety' with great accuracy ; and when that was ended, both on his part and Morgiana's, a rapturous knocking of glasses was heard in the little bar, then a great clapping of hands, and finally, somebody shouted '*Brava !*'

At that word Eglantine turned deadly pale, then gave a start, then a rush forward, which pinned, or rather cushioned, the tailor against the wall, then twisting himself abruptly round, he sprang to the door of the bar, and bounced into that apartment.

'*How are you, my nosegay ?*' exclaimed the same voice which had shouted '*Brava.*' It was that of Captain Walker.

At ten o'clock the next morning a gentleman, with the king's button on his military coat, walked abruptly into Mr. Eglantine's shop, and, turning on Mr. Mossrose, said, 'Tell your master I want to see him.'

'He's in his studio,' said Mr. Mossrose.

'Well then, fellow, go and fetch him !'

And Mossrose, thinking it must be the lord-chamberlain, or Doctor Praetorius at least, walked into the studio, where the perfumer was seated in a very glossy old silk dressing-gown, his fair hair hanging over his white face, his double chin over his flaccid, whity-brown shirt-collar, his pea-green slippers on the hob, and, on the fire, the pot of chocolate which was simmering for his breakfast. A lazier fellow than poor Eglantine it would be hard to find ; whereas, on the contrary, Woolsey was always up and brushed, spick-and-span, at seven o'clock ; and had gone through his books, and given out the work for the journeymen, and eaten a hearty breakfast of rashers of bacon, before Eglantine had put the usual pound of grease to his

hair (his fingers were always as damp and shiny as if he had them in a pomatum-pot), and arranged his figure for the day.

'Here's a gent wants you in the shop,' says Mr. Mossrose, having the door of communication wide open.

'Say I'm in bed. Mr. Mossrose ; I'm out of sperrets, and really can see nobody.'

'It's some one from Vindsor, I think ; he's got the royal button,' says Mossrose.

'It's me—Woolsey,' shouted the little man from the shop.

Mr. Eglantine at this jumped up, made a rush to the door leading to his private apartment, and disappeared in a twinkling. But it must not be imagined that he fled in order to avoid Mr. Woolsey. He only went away for one minute just to put on his belt, for he was ashamed to be seen without it by his rival.

This being assumed, and his toilet somewhat arranged, Mr. Woolsey was admitted into his private room. And Mossrose would have heard every word of the conversation between those two gentlemen, had not Woolsey, opening the door, suddenly pounced on the assistant, taken him by the collar, and told him to disappear altogether into the shop, which Mossrose did, vowing he would have his revenge.

The subject which Woolsey had come to treat was an important one. 'Mr. Eglantine,' says he, 'there's no use disguising from one another that we are both of us in love with Miss Morgiana, and that our chances up to this time have been pretty equal. But that captain whom you introduced, like an ass as you were——'

'An ass, Mr. Woolsey ? I'd have you to know, sir, that I'm no more a hass than you are, sir ; and as for introducing the captain, I did no such thing.'

'Well, well, he's got a poaching into our preserves somehow. He's evidently sweet upon the young woman, and is a more fashionable chap than either of us two. We must get him out of the house, sir—we must circumvent him ; and *then*, Mr. Eglantine, will be time enough for you and me to try which is the best man.'

'*He* the best man !' thought Eglantine, 'the little, bald, unsightly tailor-creature ! A man with no more soul than his smoothing-hiron !' But the perfumer, as may be imagined, did not utter this sentiment aloud, but expressed

himself quite willing to enter into any *hamicable* arrangement, by which the new candidate for Miss Crump's favour must be thrown over. It was, accordingly, agreed between the two gentlemen that they should coalesce against the common enemy; that they should, by reciting many perfectly well-founded stories in the captain's disfavour, influence the minds of Miss Crump's parents, and of herself, if possible, against this wolf in sheep's clothing; and that, when they were once fairly rid of him, each should be at liberty, as before, to prefer his own claim.

'I have thought of a subject,' said the little tailor, turning very red, and hemming and hawing a great deal. 'I've thought, I say, of a pint, which may be resorted to with advantage at the present juncture, and in which each of us may be useful to the other. An exchange, Mr. Eglantine, do you take?'

'Do you mean an accommodation-bill?' said Eglantine, whose mind ran a good deal on that species of exchange.

'Pooh, nonsense, sir. The name of *our* firm is, I flatter myself, a little more up in the market than some other people's names.'

'Do you mean to insult the name of Archibald Eglantine, sir? I'd have you to know that at three months——'

'Nonsense!' says Mr. Woolsey, mastering his emotion; 'there's no use a-quarrelling, Mr. E.; we're not in love with each other, I know that. You wish me hanged, or as good, I know that!'

'Indeed I don't, sir!'

'You do, sir; I tell you, you do! and what's more, I wish the same to you—transported, at any rate! But as two sailors, when a boat's a-sinking, though they hate each other ever so much, will help and bale the boat out; so, sir, let *us* act: let us be the two sailors.'

'Bail, sir!' said Eglantine, as usual mistaking the drift of the argument, 'I'll bail no man! If you're in difficulties, I think you had better go to your senior partner, Mr. Woolsey;' and Eglantine's cowardly little soul was filled with a savage satisfaction to think that his enemy was in distress, and had actually been obliged to come to *him* for succour.

'You're enough to make Job swear, you great, fat, stupid, lazy old barber!' roared Mr. Woolsey, in a fury.

Eglantine jumped up and made for the bell-rope. The gallant little tailor laughed.

'There's no need to call in Betsy,' said he, 'I'm not a-going to eat you, Eglantine; you're a bigger man than me: if you were just to fall on me, you'd smother me! Just sit still on the sofa and listen to reason.'

'Well, sir, proceed,' said the barber with a gasp.

'Now, listen! What's the darling wish of your heart? I know it, sir! you've told it to Mr. Tressle, sir, and other gents at the club. The darling wish of your heart, sir, is to have a slap-up coat turned out of the *ateliers* of Messrs. Linsey, Woolsey and Company. You said you'd give twenty guineas for one of our coats, you know you did! Lord Bolsterton's a fatter man than you, and look what a figure we turn *him* out. Can any firm in England dress Lord Bolsterton but us, so as to make his lordship look decent? I defy 'em, sir! We could have given Daniel Lambert a figure!'

'If I want a coat, sir,' said Mr. Eglantine, 'and I don't deny it, there's some people want a *head of hair*!'

'That's the very point I was coming to,' said the tailor, resuming the violent blush which was mentioned as having suffused his countenance at the beginning of the conversation. 'Let us have terms of mutual accommodation. Make me a wig, Mr. Eglantine, and though I never yet cut a yard of cloth except for a gentleman, I'll pledge you my word I'll make you a coat.'

'Will you, honour bright?' says Eglantine.

'Honour bright,' says the tailor. 'Look!' and in an instant he drew from his pocket one of those slips of parchment which gentlemen of his profession carry, and putting Eglantine into the proper position, began to take the preliminary observations. He felt Eglantine's heart thump with happiness as his measure passed over that soft part of the perfumer's person.

Then putting down the window-blind, and looking that the door was locked, and blushing still more deeply than ever, the tailor seated himself in an arm-chair towards which Mr. Eglantine beckoned him, and, taking off his black wig, exposed his head to the great perruquier's gaze. Mr. Eglantine looked at it, measured it, manipulated it, sat for three minutes with his head in his hand and his elbow on his knee gazing at the tailor's cranium with all his might, walked round it twice or thrice, and then said, 'It's enough, Mr. Woolsey, consider the job as done. And

now, sir,' said he, with a greatly relieved air, 'and now, Woolsey, let us 'ave a glass of curaçao to celebrate this hauspicious meeting.'

The tailor, however, stiffly replied that he never drank in a morning, and left the room without offering to shake Mr. Eglantine by the hand, for he despised that gentleman very heartily, and himself, too, for coming to any compromise with him, and for so far demeaning himself as to make a coat for a barber.

Looking from his chambers on the other side of the street, that inevitable Mr. Walker saw the tailor issuing from the perfumer's shop, and was at no loss to guess that something extraordinary must be in progress when two such bitter enemies met together.

CHAPTER. III

WHAT CAME OF MR. WALKER'S DISCOVERY OF 'THE BOOTJACK'

It is very easy to state how the captain came to take up that proud position at the Bootjack which we have seen him occupy on the evening when the sound of the fatal 'brava' so astonished Mr. Eglantine.

The mere entry into the establishment was, of course, not difficult. Any person by simply uttering the words, 'A pint of beer,' was free of the Bootjack; and it was some such watchword that Howard Walker employed when he made his first appearance. He requested to be shown into a parlour where he might repose himself for a while, and was ushered into that very *sanctum* where the Kidney Club met. Then he stated that the beer was the best he had ever tasted, except in Bavaria, and in some parts of Spain, he added; and professing to be extremely 'peckish,' requested to know if there were any cold meat in the house whereof he could make a dinner.

'I don't usually dine at this hour, landlord,' said he, flinging down a half-sovereign for payment of the beer; 'but your parlour looks so comfortable and the Windsor chairs are so snug, that I'm sure I could not dine better at the first club in London.'

'One of the first clubs in London is held in this very room,' said Mr. Crump, very well pleased; 'and attended by some of the best gents in town, too. We call it the Kidney Club.'

'Why, bless my soul! it is the very club my friend, Eglantine, has so often talked to me about, and attended by some of the tip-top tradesmen of the metropolis!'

'There's better men here than Mr. Eglantine,' replied Mr. Crump; 'though he's a good man—I don't say he's not a good man—but there's better. Mr. Clinker, sir; Mr. Woolsey, of the house of Linsey, Woolsey & Co.'

'The great army-clothiers!' cried Walker; 'the first house in town!' and so continued, with exceeding urbanity, holding conversation with Mr. Crump, until the honest landlord retired delighted, and told Mrs. Crump in the bar that there was a tip-top swell in the Kidney parlour, who was a-going to have his dinner there.

Fortune favoured the brave captain in every way: it was just Mr. Crump's own dinner-hour; and on Mrs. Crump's stepping into the parlour to ask the guest whether he would like a slice of the joint to which the family were about to sit down, fancy that lady's start of astonishment at recognizing Mr. Eglantine's facetious friend of the day before. The captain at once demanded permission to partake of the joint at the family table; the lady could not with any great reason deny this request; the captain was inducted into the bar, and Miss Crump, who always came down late for dinner, was even more astonished than her mamma on beholding the occupier of the fourth place at the table. Had she expected to see the fascinating stranger so soon again? I think she had. Her big eyes said as much, as, furtively looking up at Mr. Walker's face, they caught his looks; and then bouncing down again towards her plate, pretended to be very busy in looking at the boiled beef and carrots there displayed. She blushed far redder than those carrots, but her shining ringlets hid her confusion together with her lovely face.

Sweet Morgiana! the billiard-ball eyes had a tremendous effect on the captain. They fell plump, as it were, into the pocket of his heart; and he gallantly proposed to treat the company to a bottle of champagne, which was accepted without much difficulty.

Mr. Crump, under pretence of going to the cellar (where

he said he had some cases of the finest champagne in Europe), called Dick, the boy, to him, and dispatched him with all speed to a wine-merchant's, where a couple of bottles of the liquor were procured.

'Bring up two bottles, Mr. C.,' Captain Walker gallantly said when Crump made his move, as it were, to the cellar; and it may be imagined after the two bottles were drunk (of which Mrs. Crump took at least nine glasses to her share), how happy, merry, and confidential the whole party had become. Crump told his story of the Bootjack, and whose boot it had drawn; the former Miss Delancy expatiated on her past theatrical life, and the pictures hanging round the room. Miss was equally communicative! and, in short, the captain had all the secrets of the little family in his possession ere sunset. He knew that Miss cared little for either of her suitors, about whom mamma and papa had a little quarrel. He heard Mrs. Crump talk of Morgiana's property, and fell more in love with her than ever. Then came tea, the luscious crumpet, the quiet game at cribbage, and the song—the song which poor Eglantine heard, and which caused Woolsey's rage and his despair.

At the close of the evening the tailor was in a greater rage, and the perfumer in greater despair than ever. He had made his little present of eau de Cologne. 'Oh, fie!' says the captain, with a hoarse laugh, '*it smells of the shop!*' He taunted the tailor about his wig, and the honest fellow had only an oath to give by way of repartee. He told his stories about his club and his lordly friends. What chance had either against the all-accomplished Howard Walker?

Old Crump, with a good innate sense of right and wrong, hated the man; Mrs. Crump did not feel quite at her ease regarding him, but Morgiana thought him the most delightful person the world ever produced.

Eglantine's usual morning costume was a blue satin neck-cloth embroidered with butterflies and ornamented with a brandy-ball brooch, a light shawl waistcoat, and a rhubarb-coloured coat of the sort which, I believe, are called Taglionis, and which have no waist-buttons, and make a pretence, as it were, to have no waists, but are in reality adopted by the fat in order to give them a waist. Nothing easier for an obese man than to have a waist; he has but to pinch his middle part a little, and the very

fat on either side pushed violently forward *makes* a waist, as it were, and our worthy perfumer's figure was that of a bolster cut almost in two with a string.

Walker presently saw him at his shop-door grinning in this costume, twiddling his ringlets with his dumpy greasy fingers, glittering with oil and rings, and looking so exceedingly contented and happy that the estate-agent felt assured some very satisfactory conspiracy had been planned between the tailor and him. How was Mr. Walker to learn what the scheme was? Alas! the poor fellow's vanity and delight were such, that he could not keep silent as to the cause of his satisfaction, and rather than not mention it at all, in the fullness of his heart he would have told his secret to Mr. Mossrose himself.

'When I get my coat,' thought the Bond Street Alnashar, 'I'll hire of Snaffle that easy-going cream-coloured 'oss that he bought from Astley's, and I'll canter through the Park, and *won't* I pass through Little Bunker's Buildings, that's all? I'll wear my gray trousers with the velvet stripe down the side, and get my spurs lacquered up, and with a French polish to my boot; and if I don't *do* for the captain and the tailor too, my name's not Archibald. And I'll tell you what I'll do: I'll hire the small Clarence, and invite the Crumps to dinner at the Gar and Starter (this was his facetious way of calling the Star and Garter), and I'll ride by them all the way to Richmond. It's rather a long ride, but with Snaffle's soft saddle I can do it pretty easy, I dare say.' And so the honest fellow built castles upon castles in the air; and the last and most beautiful vision of all was Miss Crump 'in white satting, with a horange-flower in her 'air,' putting him in possession of her lovely hand before the altar of St. George's, 'Anover Square. As for Woolsey, Eglantine determined that he should have the best wig his art could produce, for he had not the least fear of his rival.

These points then being arranged to the poor fellow's satisfaction, what does he do but send out for half a quire of pink note-paper, and in a filigree envelope dispatch a note of invitation to the ladies at the Bootjack:—

BOWER OF BLOOM, BOND STREET,
Thursday.

'Mr. Archibald Eglantine presents his compliments to Mrs. and Miss Crump, and requests the *honour and pleasure* of their company

at the Star and Garter at Richmond to an early dinner on Sunday next.

'If agreeable, Mr. Eglantine's carriage will be at your door at three o'clock, and I propose to accompany them on horseback if agreeable likewise.'

This note was sealed with yellow wax, and sent to its destination ; and of course Mr. Eglantine went himself for the answer in the evening : and of course he told the ladies to look out for a certain new coat he was going to sport on Sunday ; and of course Mr. Walker happens to call the next day with spare tickets for Mrs. Crump and her daughter, when the whole secret was laid bare to him,—how the ladies were going to Richmond on Sunday in Mr. Snaffle's Clarence, and how Mr. Eglantine was to ride by their side.

Mr. Walker did not keep horses of his own, his magnificent friends at the Regent had plenty in their stables, and some of these were at livery at the establishment of the captain's old 'college' companion, Mr. Snaffle. It was easy, therefore, for the captain to renew his acquaintance with that individual. So, hanging on the arm of my Lord Vauxhall, Capt. Walker next day made his appearance at Snaffle's livery stables and looked at the various horses there for sale or at bait, and soon managed, by putting some facetious questions to Mr. Snaffle regarding the Kidney Club, &c., to place himself on a friendly footing with that gentleman, and to learn from him what horse Mr. Eglantine was to ride on Sunday.

The monster Walker had fully determined in his mind that Eglantine should *fall off* that horse in the course of his Sunday's ride.

'That sing'lar hanimal,' said Mr. Snaffle, pointing to the old horse, 'is the celebrated Hemperor that was the wonder of Hastley's some years back, and was parted with by Mr. Ducrow honly because his feelin's wouldn't allow him to keep him no longer after the death of the first Mrs. D., who invariably rode him. I bought him, thinking that p'raps ladies and cockney-bucks might like to ride him (for his haction is wonderful, and he canters like a harm-chair) ; but he's not safe on any day except Sundays.'

'And why's that ?' asked Captain Walker. 'Why is he safer on Sundays than other days ?'

'Because there's no music in the streets on Sundays. The

first gent that rode him found himself dancing a quadrille in Hupper Brooke Street to an 'urdy-gurdy that was playin' "Cherry ripe," such is the natur of the hanimal. And if you recklect the play of the "Battle of Hoysterlitz," in which Mrs. D. hacted "the female hussar," you may remember how she and the horse died in the third act to the toon of "God preserve the Emperor," from which this horse took his name. Only play that toon to him, and he rears hisself up, beats the hair in time with his fore legs, and then sinks gently to the ground, as though he were carried off by a cannon-ball. He served a lady hopposite Hapsley Ouse so one day, and since then I've never let him out to a friend except on Sunday, when, in course, there's no danger. Heglantine *is* a friend of mine, and of course I wouldn't put the poor fellow on a hanimal I couldn't trust.'

After a little more conversation, my lord and his friend quitted Mr. Snaffle's, and as they walked away towards the Regent, his lordship might be heard shrieking with laughter, crying 'Capital, by jingo! exthlent! Dwive down in the dwag! Take Lungly. Worth a thousand pound, by Jove!' and similar ejaculations, indicative of exceeding delight.

On Saturday morning, at ten o'clock to a moment, Mr. Woolsey called at Mr. Eglantine's with a yellow handkerchief under his arm. It contained the best and handsomest body-coat that ever gentleman put on. It fitted Eglantine to a nicety—it did not pinch him in the least, and yet it was of so exquisite a cut that the perfumer found, as he gazed delighted in the glass, that he looked like a manly, portly, high-bred gentleman—a lieutenant-colonel in the army, at the very least.

'You're a full man, Eglantine,' said the tailor, delighted, too, with his own work; 'but that can't be helped. You look more like Hercules than Falstaff now, sir; and if a coat can make a gentleman, a gentleman you are. Let me recommend you to sink the blue cravat, and take the stripes off your trousers. Dress quiet, sir; draw it mild. Plain waistcoat, dark trousers, black neckcloth, black hat, and if there's a better dressed man in Europe to-morrow I'm a Dutchman.'

'Thank you, Woolsey—thank you, my dear sir,' said the charmed perfumer. 'And now I'll just trouble you to try on this here.'

The wig had been made with equal skill; it was not in

the florid style which Mr. Eglantine loved in his own person, but, as the perfumer said, a simple, straightforward head of hair. 'It seems as if it had grown there all your life, Mr. Woolsey; nobody would tell that it was not your nat'ral colour (Mr. Woolsey blushed)—it makes you look ten year younger; and as for that scarecrow yonder, you'll never, I think, want to wear that again.'

Woolsey looked in the glass and was delighted too. The two rivals shook hands and straightway became friends, and in the overflowing of his heart the perfumer mentioned to the tailor the party which he had arranged for the next day, and offered him a seat in the carriage and at the dinner at the Star and Garter. 'Would you like to ride?' said Eglantine, with rather a consequential air. 'Snaffle will mount you, and we can go one on each side of the ladies, if you like.'

But Woolsey humbly said he was not a riding man, and gladly consented to take a place in the Clarence carriage, provided he was allowed to bear half the expenses of the entertainment. This proposal was agreed to by Mr. Eglantine, and the two gentlemen parted to meet once more at the Kidneys that night, when everybody was edified by the friendly tone adopted between them.

Mr. Snaffle, at the club-meeting, made the very same proposal to Mr. Woolsey that the perfumer had made; and stated that as Eglantine was going to ride Hemperor, Woolsey, at least, ought to mount too. But he was met by the same modest refusal on the tailor's part, who stated that he had never mounted a horse yet, and preferred greatly the use of a coach.

Eglantine's character as a 'swell' rose greatly with the club that evening.

Two o'clock on Sunday came; the two beaux arrived punctually at the door to receive the two smiling ladies.

'Bless us, Mr. Eglantine!' said Miss Crump, quite struck by him, 'I never saw you look so handsome in your life.' He could have flung his arms around her neck at the compliment. 'And, law, ma! what has happened to Mr. Woolsey? doesn't he look ten years younger than yesterday?' Mamma assented, and Woolsey bowed gallantly, and the two gentlemen exchanged a nod of hearty friendship.

The day was delightful. Eglantine pranced along magnificently on his cantering arm-chair, with his hat on

one ear, his left hand on his side, and his head flung over his shoulder, and throwing under-glances at Morgiana whenever the Emperor was in advance of the Clarence. The Emperor pricked up his ears a little uneasily passing the Ebenezer chapel in Richmond, where the congregation were singing a hymn, but beyond this no accident occurred; nor was Mr. Eglantine in the least stiff or fatigued by the time the party reached Richmond, where he arrived time enough to give his steed into the charge of an ostler, and to present his elbow to the ladies as they alighted from the Clarence carriage.

What this jovial party ate for dinner at the Star and Garter need not here be set down. If they did not drink champagne I am very much mistaken. They were as merry as any four people in Christendom; and between the bewildering attentions of the perfumer, and the manly courtesy of the tailor, Morgiana very likely forgot the gallant captain, or, at least, was very happy in his absence.

At eight o'clock they began to drive homewards. 'Won't you come into the carriage?' said Morgiana to Eglantine, with one of her tenderest looks; 'Dick can ride the horse.' But Archibald was too great a lover of equestrian exercise. 'I'm afraid to trust anybody on this horse,' said he with a knowing look; and so he pranced away by the side of the little carriage. The moon was brilliant, and, with the aid of the gas-lamps, illuminated the whole face of the country in a way inexpressibly lively.

Presently, in the distance, the sweet and plaintive notes of a bugle were heard, and the performer, with great delicacy, executed a religious air. 'Music, too! heavenly!' said Morgiana, throwing up her eyes to the stars. The music came nearer and nearer, and the delight of the company was only more intense. The fly was going at about four miles an hour, and the Emperor began cantering to time at the same rapid pace.

'This must be some gallantry of yours, Mr. Woolsey,' said the romantic Morgiana, turning upon that gentleman. 'Mr. Eglantine treated us to the dinner, and you have provided us with the music.'

Now Woolsey had been a little, a very little, dissatisfied during the course of the evening's entertainment, by fancying that Eglantine, a much more voluble person than himself, had obtained rather an undue share of the ladies' favour;

and as he himself paid half of the expenses, he felt very much vexed to think that the perfumer should take all the credit of the business to himself. So when Miss Crump asked if he had provided the music, he foolishly made an evasive reply to her query, and rather wished her to imagine that he *had* performed that piece of gallantry. 'If it pleases *you*, Miss Morgiana,' said this artful Schneider, 'what more need any man ask ? wouldn't I have all Drury Lane orchestra to please you ?'

The bugle had by this time arrived quite close to the Clarence carriage, and if Morgiana had looked round she might have seen whence the music came. Behind her came slowly a drag, or private stage coach, with four horses. Two grooms with cockades and folded arms were behind ; and driving on the box, a little gentleman, with a blue bird's-eye neckcloth, and a white coat. A bugleman was by his side, who performed the melodies which so delighted Miss Crump. He played very gently and sweetly, and 'God save the King' trembled so softly out of the brazen orifice of his bugle, that the Crumps, the tailor, and Eglantine himself, who was riding close by the carriage, were quite charmed and subdued.

'Thank you, *dear* Mr. Woolsey,' said the grateful Morgiana ; which made Eglantine stare, and Woolsey was just saying, 'Really, upon my word, I've nothing to do with it,' when the man on the drag-box said to the bugleman, 'Now !'

The bugleman began the tune of—

Heaven preserve our Emperor Fra-an-cis,
Rum tum-ti-tum-ti-titty-ti.

At the sound, the Emperor reared himself (with a roar from Mr. Eglantine), reared and beat the air with his forepaws ; Eglantine flung his arms round the beast's neck, still he kept beating time with his forepaws. Mrs. Crump screamed ; Mr. Woolsey, Dick, the Clarence coachman, Lord Vauxhall (for it was he), and his lordship's two grooms, burst into a shout of laughter ; Morgiana cries 'Mercy ! mercy !' Eglantine yells 'Stop !'—'Wo !'—'Oh !' and a thousand ejaculations of hideous terror ; until, at last, down drops the Emperor stone dead in the middle of the road, as if carried off by a cannon-ball.

Fancy the situation, ye callous souls who laugh at the

misery of humanity, fancy the situation of poor Eglantine under the Emperor. He had fallen very easy, the animal lay perfectly quiet, and the perfumer was to all intents and purposes as dead as the animal. He had not fainted, but he was immovable with terror; he lay in a puddle, and thought it was his own blood gushing from him; and he would have lain there until Monday morning, if my lord's grooms, descending, had not dragged him by the coat-collars from under the beast, who still lay quiet.

'Play "Charming Judy Callaghan," will ye?' says Mr. Snaffle's man, the fly-driver; on which the bugler performed that lively air, and up started the horse, and the grooms, who were rubbing Mr. Eglantine down against a lamp-post, invited him to remount.

But his heart was too broken for that. The ladies gladly made room for him in the Clarence. Dick mounted Emperor and rode homewards. The drag, too, drove away, playing, 'Oh dear, what can the matter be?' and with a scowl of furious hate, Mr. Eglantine sat and regarded his rival. His pantaloons were split, and his coat torn up the back.

'Are you hurt much, dear Mr. Archibald?' said Morgiana, with unaffected compassion.

'N-not much,' said the poor fellow, ready to burst into tears.

'O Mr. Woolsey,' added the good-natured girl, 'how could you play such a trick?'

'Upon my word,' Woolsey began, intending to plead innocence; but the ludicrousness of the situation was once more too much for him, and he burst out into a roar of laughter.

'You! you cowardly beast,' howled out Eglantine, now driven to fury, '*you* laugh at me, you miserable cretur! Take *that*, sir!' and he fell upon him with all his might, and wellnigh throttled the tailor, and pummelling his eyes, his nose, his ears, with inconceivable rapidity, wrenched, finally, his wig off his head, and flung it into the road.

Morgiana saw that Woolsey had red hair.¹

¹ A French *proverbe* furnished the author with the notion of the rivalry between the Barber and the Tailor.

CHAPTER IV

IN WHICH THE HEROINE HAS A NUMBER MORE LOVERS, AND
CUTS A VERY DASHING FIGURE IN THE WORLD

Two years have elapsed since the festival at Richmond, which, begun so peaceably, ended in such general uproar. Morgiana never could be brought to pardon Woolsey's red hair, nor to help laughing at Eglantine's disasters, nor could the two gentlemen be reconciled to one another. Woolsey, indeed, sent a challenge to the perfumer to meet him with pistols, which the latter declined, saying, justly, that tradesmen had no business with such weapons: on this the tailor proposed to meet him with coats off, and have it out like men, in the presence of their friends of the Kidney Club. The perfumer said he would be party to no such vulgar transaction; on which, Woolsey, exasperated, made an oath that he would tweak the perfumer's nose so surely as he ever entered the club-room, and thus *one* member of the Kidneys was compelled to vacate his arm-chair.

Woolsey himself attended every meeting regularly, but he did not evince that gaiety and good humour which renders men's company agreeable in clubs. On arriving, he would order the boy to 'tell him when that scoundrel Eglantine came,' and, hanging up his hat on a peg, would scowl round the room, and tuck up his sleeves very high, and stretch, and shake his fingers and wrists, as if getting them ready for that pull of the nose which he intended to bestow upon his rival. So prepared, he would sit down and smoke his pipe quite silently, glaring at all, and jumping up, and hitching up his coat-sleeves, when any one entered the room.

The Kidneys did not like this behaviour. Clinker ceased to come. Bustard, the poulterer, ceased to come. As for Snaffle, he also disappeared, for Woolsey wished to make him answerable for the misbehaviour of Eglantine, and proposed to him the duel which the latter had declined. So Snaffle went. Presently they all went, except the tailor and Tressle, who lived down the street, and these two would sit and puff their tobacco, one on each side of Crump, the landlord, as silent as Indian chiefs in a wigwam. There grew

to be more and more room for poor old Crump in his chair and in his clothes ; the Kidneys were gone, and why should he remain ? One Saturday he did not come down to preside at the club (as he still fondly called it), and the Saturday following Tressle had made a coffin for him ; and Woolsey, with the undertaker by his side, followed to the grave the father of the Kidneys.

Mrs. Crump was now alone in the world. ‘ How alone ? ’ says some innocent and respected reader. Ah ! my dear sir, do you know so little of human nature as not to be aware that, one week after the Richmond affair, Morgiana married Captain Walker ? That did she privately, of course ; and, after the ceremony, came tripping back to her parents, as young people do in plays, and said, ‘ Forgive me, dear pa and ma, I’m married, and here is my husband, the captain ! ’ Papa and mamma did forgive her, as why shouldn’t they ? and papa paid over her fortune to her, which she carried home delighted to the captain. This happened several months before the demise of old Crump ; and Mrs. Captain Walker was on the Continent with her Howard when that melancholy event took place, hence Mrs. Crump’s loneliness and unprotected condition. Morgiana had not latterly seen much of the old people ; how could she, moving in her exalted sphere, receive at her genteel, new residence in the Edgware Road, the old publican and his wife ?

Being, then, alone in the world, Mrs. Crump could not abear, she said, to live in the house where she had been so respected and happy : so she sold the goodwill of the Sun, and, with the money arising from this sale and her own private fortune, being able to muster some sixty pounds per annum, retired to the neighbourhood of her dear old Sadler’s Wells, where she boarded with one of Mrs. Serle’s forty pupils. Her heart was broken, she said ; but nevertheless, about nine months after Mr. Crump’s death, the wallflowers, nasturtiums, polyanthuses and convolvuluses began to blossom under her bonnet as usual ; in a year she was dressed quite as fine as ever, and now never missed the Wells, or some other place of entertainment, one single night, but was as regular as the box-keeper. Nay, she was a buxom widow still, and an old flame of hers, Fisk, so celebrated as pantaloon in Grimaldi’s time, but now doing the ‘ heavy fathers ’ at the Wells, proposed to her to exchange her name for his.

But this proposal the worthy widow declined altogether. To say truth, she was exceedingly proud of her daughter, Mrs. Captain Walker. They did not see each other much at first ; but every now and then Mrs. Crump would pay her visit to the folks in Connaught Square ; and on the days when ' the captain's ' lady called in the City Road, there was not a single official at the ' Wells,' from the first tragedian down to the call-boy, who was not made aware of the fact.

It has been said that Morgiana carried home her fortune in her own reticule, and, smiling, placed the money in her husband's lap ; and hence the reader may imagine, who knows Mr. Walker to be an extremely selfish fellow, that a great scene of anger must have taken place, and many coarse oaths and epithets of abuse must have come from him, when he found that five hundred pounds was all that his wife had, although he had expected five thousand with her. But, to say the truth, Walker was at this time almost in love with his handsome, rosy, good-humoured, simple wife. They had made a fortnight's tour, during which they had been exceedingly happy ; and there was something so frank and touching in the way in which the kind creature flung her all into his lap, saluting him with a hearty embrace at the same time, and wishing that it were a thousand billion, billion times more, so that her darling Howard might enjoy it, that the man would have been a ruffian indeed could he have found it in his heart to be angry with her ; and so he kissed her in return, and patted her on the shining ringlets, and then counted over the notes with rather a disconsolate air, and ended by locking them up in his portfolio. In fact, *she* had never deceived him ; Eglantine had, and he in return had out-tricked Eglantine ; and so warm were his affections for Morgiana at this time, that, upon my word and honour, I don't think he repented of his bargain. Besides, five hundred pounds in crisp bank-notes was a sum of money such as the captain was not in the habit of handling every day ; a dashing, sanguine fellow, he fancied there was no end to it, and already thought of a dozen ways by which it should increase and multiply into a plum. Woe is me ! Has not many a simple soul examined five new hundred-pound notes in this way, and calculated their powers of duration and multiplication !

This subject, however, is too painful to be dwelt on.

Let us hear what Walker did with his money. Why, he furnished the house in the Edgware Road before mentioned, he ordered a handsome service of plate, he sported a phaeton and two ponies, he kept a couple of smart maids and a groom foot-boy,—in fact, he mounted just such a neat, unpretending, gentlemanlike establishment as becomes a respectable young couple on their outset in life. ‘I’ve sown my wild oats,’ he would say to his acquaintances; ‘a few years since, perhaps, I would have longed to cut a dash, but now prudence is the word; and I’ve settled every farthing of Mrs. Walker’s fifteen thousand on herself.’ And the best proof that the world had confidence in him is the fact, that for the articles of plate, equipage, and furniture, which have been mentioned as being in his possession, he did not pay one single shilling; and so prudent was he, that but for turnpikes, postage-stamps, and king’s taxes, he hardly had occasion to change a five-pound note of his wife’s fortune.

To tell the truth, Mr. Walker had determined to make his fortune. And what is easier in London? Is not the share-market open to all? Do not Spanish and Columbian bonds rise and fall? For what are companies invented but to place thousands in the pockets of shareholders and directors? Into these commercial pursuits the gallant captain now plunged with great energy, and made some brilliant hits at first starting, and bought and sold so opportunely, that his name began to rise in the city as a capitalist, and might be seen in the printed list of directors of many excellent and philanthropic schemes, of which there is never any lack in London. Business to the amount of thousands was done at his agency; shares of vast value were bought and sold under his management. How poor Mr. Eglantine used to hate him and envy him, as from the door of his emporium (the firm was Eglantine and Mossrose now) he saw the captain daily arrive in his pony-phaeton, and heard of the start he had taken in life.

The only regret Mrs. Walker had was that she did not enjoy enough of her husband’s society. His business called him away all day; his business, too, obliged him to leave her of evenings very frequently alone; whilst he (always in pursuit of business) was dining with his great friends at the club, and drinking claret and champagne to the same end.

She was a perfectly good-natured and simple soul, and never made him a single reproach; but when he could pass an evening at home with her she was delighted, and when he could drive with her in the Park she was happy for a week after. On these occasions, and in the fullness of her heart, she would drive to her mother and tell her story. 'Howard drove with me in the Park yesterday, mamma;' 'Howard has promised to take me to the Opera,' and so forth. And that evening the manager, Mr. Gawler, the first tragedian, Mrs. Serle and her forty pupils, all the box-keepers, bonnet-women—nay, the ginger-beer girls themselves at the Wells, knew that Captain and Mrs. Walker were at Kensington Gardens, or were to have the Marchioness of Billingsgate's box at the Opera. One night—oh! joy of joys!—Mrs. Captain Walker appeared in a private box at the Wells. That's she with the black ringlets and Cashmere shawl, smelling-bottle, black velvet gown, and bird of paradise in her hat. Goodness gracious! how they all acted at her, Gawler and all, and how happy Mrs. Crump was! She kissed her daughter between all the acts, she nodded to all her friends on the stage, in the slips, or in the real water; she introduced her daughter, Mrs. Captain Walker, to the box-opener, and Melvil Delamere (the first comic), Canterfield (the tyrant), and Jonesini (the celebrated Fontarabian Statuesque), were all on the steps, and shouted for Mrs. Captain Walker's carriage, and waved their hats, and bowed as the little ponyphaeton drove away. Walker, in his moustachios, had come in at the end of the play, and was not a little gratified by the compliments paid to himself and lady.

Among the other articles of luxury with which the captain furnished his house we must not omit to mention an extremely grand piano, which occupied four-fifths of Mrs. Walker's little back drawing-room, and at which she was in the habit of practising continually. All day and all night during Walker's absences (and these occurred all night and all day) you might hear—the whole street might hear—the voice of the lady at No. 23 gurgling, and shaking, and quavering, as ladies do when they practise. The street did not approve of the continuance of the noise, but neighbours are difficult to please, and what would Morgiana have had to do if she had ceased to sing? It would be hard to lock a blackbird in a cage and prevent him from

singing too. And so Walker's blackbird, in the snug little cage in the Edgware Road, sang and was not unhappy.

After the pair had been married for about a year, the omnibus that passes both by Mrs. Crump's house, near the Wells, and by Mrs. Walker's street off the Edgware Road, brought up the former-named lady almost every day to her daughter. She came when the captain had gone to his business; she stayed to a two-o'clock dinner with Morgiana, she drove with her in the pony-carriage round the Park, but she never stopped later than six. Had she not to go to the play at seven? And, besides, the captain *might* come home with some of his great friends, and he always swore and grumbled much if he found his mother-in-law on the premises. As for Morgiana, she was one of those women who encourage despotism in husbands. What the husband says must be right, because he says it; what he orders must be obeyed tremblingly. Mrs. Walker gave up her entire reason to her lord. Why was it? Before marriage she had been an independent little person; she had far more brains than her Howard. I think it must have been his moustachios that frightened her and caused in her this humility.

Selfish husbands have this advantage in maintaining with easy-minded wives a rigid and inflexible behaviour, viz. that, if they *do* by any chance grant a little favour, the ladies receive it with such transports of gratitude as they would never think of showing to a lord and master who was accustomed to give them everything they asked for; and hence, when Captain Walker signified his assent to his wife's prayer that she should take a singing-master she thought his generosity almost divine, and fell upon her mamma's neck, when that lady came the next day, and said what a dear adorable angel her Howard was, and what ought she not to do for a man who had taken her from her humble situation, and raised her to be what she was! What she was, poor soul! She was the wife of a swindling *parvenu* gentleman. She received visits from six ladies of her husband's acquaintances, the two attorneys' ladies, his bill-broker's lady, and one or two more, of whose characters we had best, if you please, say nothing; and she thought it an honour to be so distinguished, as if Walker had been a Lord Exeter to marry a humble maiden, or a noble prince to fall in love with a humble Cinderella, or a majestic Jove

to come down from heaven and woo a Semele. Look through the world, respectable reader, and among your honourable acquaintances, and say if this sort of faith in women is not very frequent? They *will* believe in their husbands, whatever the latter do. Let John be dull, ugly, vulgar, and a humbug, his Mary Anne never finds it out; let him tell his stories ever so many times, there is she always ready with her kind smile; let him be stingy, she says he is prudent; let him quarrel with his best friend, she says he is always in the right; let him be prodigal, she says he is generous, and that his health requires enjoyment; let him be idle, he must have relaxation; and she will pinch herself and her household that he may have a guinea for his club. Yes; and every morning, as she wakes and looks at the face, snoring on the pillow by her side—every morning, I say, she blesses that dull, ugly countenance, and the dull, ugly soul reposing there, and thinks both are something divine. I want to know how it is that women do not find out their husbands to be humbugs? Nature has so provided it, and thanks to her. When last year they were acting the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and all the boxes began to roar with great coarse heehaws at Titania hugging Bottom's long, long ears—to me, considering these things, it seemed that there were a hundred other male brutes squatted round about, and treated just as reasonably as Bottom was. Their Titanias lulled them to sleep in their laps, summoned a hundred smiling, delicate, household fairies to tickle their gross intellects and minister to their vulgar pleasures; and (as the above remarks are only supposed to apply to honest women loving their own lawful spouses) a mercy it is that no wicked Puck is in the way to open their eyes, and point out their folly. *Cui bono?* let them live on in their deceit; I know two lovely ladies who will read this, and will say it is just very likely, and not see in the least that it has been written regarding *them*.

Another point of sentiment, and one curious to speculate on. Have you not remarked the immense works of art that women get through? The worsted-work sofas, the counterpanes patched or knitted (but these are among the old-fashioned in the country), the bushels of pincushions, the albums they laboriously fill, the tremendous pieces of music they practise, the thousand other fiddle-faddles

which occupy the attention of the dear souls—nay, have we not seen them seated of evenings in a squad or company, Louisa employed at the worsted-work before mentioned, Eliza at the pincushions, Amelia at card-racks or filigree matches, and, in the midst, Theodosia, with one of the candles, reading out a novel aloud? Ah! my dear sir, mortal creatures must be very hard put to it for amusement, be sure of that, when they are forced to gather together in a company and hear novels read aloud! They only do it because they can't help it, depend upon it; it is a sad life, a poor pastime. Mr. Dickens, in his American book, tells of the prisoners at the silent prison, how they had ornamented their rooms, some of them with a frightful prettiness and elaboration. Women's fancy-work is of this sort often—only prison work, done because there was no other exercising-ground for their poor little thoughts and fingers; and hence these wonderful pincushions are executed, these counterpanes woven, these sonatas learned. By everything sentimental, when I see two kind, innocent, fresh-cheeked young women go to a piano, and sit down opposite to it upon two chairs piled with more or less music-books (according to their convenience), and, so seated, go through a set of double-barrelled variations upon this or that tune by Herz or Kalkbrenner,—I say, far from receiving any satisfaction at the noise made by the performance, my too susceptible heart is given up entirely to bleeding for the performers. What hours, and weeks, nay, preparatory years of study, has that infernal jingle cost them! What sums has papa paid, what scoldings has mamma administered ('Lady Bullblock does not play herself,' Sir Thomas says, 'but she has naturally the finest ear for music ever known!'); what evidences of slavery, in a word, are there! It is the condition of the young lady's existence. She breakfasts at eight, she does *Mangnall's Questions* with the governess till ten, she practises till one, she walks in the square with bars round her till two, then she practises again, then she sews or hems, or reads French, or Hume's *History*, then she comes down to play to papa, because he likes music whilst he is asleep after dinner, and then it is bedtime, and the morrow is another day with what are called the same 'duties' to be gone through. A friend of mine went to call at a nobleman's house the other day, and one of the young ladies of the house came into the

room with a tray on her head ; this tray was to give Lady Maria a graceful carriage. *Mon Dieu !* and who knows but at that moment Lady Bell was at work with a pair of her dumb namesakes, and Lady Sophy lying flat on a stretching-board ? I could write whole articles on this theme, but peace ! we are keeping Mrs. Walker waiting all the while.

Well, then, if the above disquisitions have anything to do with the story, as no doubt they have, I wish it to be understood that, during her husband's absence and her own solitary confinement, Mrs. Howard Walker bestowed a prodigious quantity of her time and energy on the cultivation of her musical talent, and having, as before stated, a very fine loud voice, speedily attained no ordinary skill in the use of it. She first had for teacher little Podmore, the fat chorus-master at the Wells, and who had taught her mother the 'Tink-a-tink' song which has been such a favourite since it first appeared. He grounded her well, and bade her eschew the singing of all those Eagle Tavern ballads in which her heart formerly delighted, and when he had brought her to a certain point of skill, the honest little chorus-master said she should have a still better instructor, and wrote a note to Captain Walker (inclosing his own little account), speaking in terms of the most flattering encomium of his lady's progress, and recommending that she should take lessons of the celebrated Baroski. Captain Walker dismissed Podmore then, and engaged Signor Baroski, at a vast expense, as he did not fail to tell his wife. In fact, he owed Baroski no less than a hundred-and-twenty guineas when he came to file his Sched. . . . But we are advancing matters.

Little Baroski is the author of the opera of *Eliogabalo*, of the oratorio of *Purgatorio*, which made such an immense sensation, of songs and ballet-musics innumerable. He is a German by birth, and shows such an outrageous partiality for pork and sausages, and attends at church so constantly, that I am sure there cannot be any foundation in the story that he is a member of the ancient religion. He is a fat little man, with a hooked nose and jetty whiskers, and coal-black shining eyes, and plenty of rings and jewels on his fingers and about his person, and a very considerable portion of his shirt-sleeves turned over his coat to take the air. His great hands (which can sprawl over half a piano,

and produce those effects on the instrument for which he is celebrated) are encased in lemon-coloured kids, new, or cleaned daily. Parenthetically, let us ask why so many men, with coarse red wrists and big hands, persist in the white kid glove and wristband system? Baroski's gloves alone must cost him a little fortune; only, he says with a leer, when asked the question, 'Get along vid you; don't you know dere is a gloveress that lets me have dem very sheap?' He rides in the Park; has splendid lodgings in Dover Street; and is a member of the Regent Club, where he is a great source of amusement to the members, to whom he tells astonishing stories of his successes with the ladies, and for whom he has always play and opera tickets in store. His eye glistens and his little heart beats when a lord speaks to him; and he has been known to spend large sums of money in giving treats to young sprigs of fashion at Richmond and elsewhere. 'In my bolyticks,' he says, 'I am Consarevatiff to de bagbone.' In fine, he is a puppy, and withal a man of considerable genius in his profession.

This gentleman then undertook to complete the musical education of Mrs. Walker. He expressed himself at once 'enshanted vid her gababilities,' found that the extent of her voice was 'brodigious,' and guaranteed that she should become a first-rate singer. The pupil was apt, the master was exceedingly skilful; and, accordingly, Mrs. Walker's progress was very remarkable; although, for her part, honest Mrs. Crump, who used to attend her daughter's lessons, would grumble not a little at the new system, and the endless exercises which she, Morgiana, was made to go through. It was very different in *her* time, she said. Inledon knew no music, and who could sing so well now? Give her a good English ballad; it was a thousand times sweeter than your *Figaros* and *Semiramides*.

In spite of these objections, however, and with amazing perseverance and cheerfulness, Mrs. Walker pursued the method of study pointed out to her by her master. As soon as her husband went to the city in the morning her operations began; if he remained away at dinner, her labours still continued; nor is it necessary for me to particularize her course of study, nor, indeed, possible, for, between ourselves, none of the male Fitz-Boodles ever could sing a note, and the jargon of scales and solfeggios is quite unknown to me. But as no man can have seen persons

addicted to music without remarking the prodigious energies they display in the pursuit, as there is no father of daughters, however ignorant, but is aware of the piano-rattling and voice-exercising which goes on in his house from morning till night, so let all fancy, without further inquiry, how the heroine of our story was at this stage of her existence occupied.

Walker was delighted with her progress, and did everything but pay Baroski, her instructor. We know why he didn't pay. It was his nature not to pay bills, except on extreme compulsion; but why did not Baroski employ that extreme compulsion? Because, if he had received his money, he would have lost his pupil, and because he loved his pupil more than money. Rather than lose her, he would have given her a guinea as well as her *cachet*. He would sometimes disappoint a great personage, but he never missed his attendance on *her*; and the truth must out, that he was in love with her, as Woolsey and Eglantine had been before.

'By the immortel Chofe!' he would say, 'dat letell ding sents me mad vid her big ice! But only vait avile, in six weeks I can bring any voman in England on her knees to me; and you shall see vat I vill do vid my Morgiana.' He attended her for six weeks punctually, and yet Morgiana was never brought down on her knees; he exhausted his best stock of 'gomblimends,' and she never seemed disposed to receive them with anything but laughter. And, as a matter of course, he only grew more infatuated with the lovely creature who was so provokingly good-humoured and so laughingly cruel.

Benjamin Baroski was one of the chief ornaments of the musical profession in London; he charged a guinea for a lesson of three-quarters of an hour abroad, and he had, furthermore, a school at his own residence, where pupils assembled in considerable numbers, and of that curious mixed kind which those may see who frequent these places of instruction. There were very innocent young ladies with their mammas, who would hurry them off trembling to the farther corner of the room when certain doubtful professional characters made their appearance. There was Miss Grigg, who sang at the Foundling, and Mr. Johnson, who sang at the Eagle Tavern, and Madame Fioravanti (a *very* doubtful character), who sang nowhere, but was always

coming out at the Italian Opera. There was Lumley Limpiter (Lord Tweedledale's son), one of the most accomplished tenors in town, and who, we have heard, sings with the professionals at a hundred concerts ; and with him, too, was Captain Guzzard of the Guards, with his tremendous bass voice, which all the world declared to be as fine as Porto's, and who shared the applauses of Baroski's school with Mr. Bulger, the dentist of Sackville Street, who neglected his ivory and gold plates for his voice, as every unfortunate individual will do who is bitten by the music mania. Then among the ladies there were a half-score of dubious pale governesses and professionals with turned frocks and lank damp bandeaux of hair under shabby little bonnets ; luckless creatures these, who were parting with their poor little store of half-guineas to be enabled to say they were pupils of Signor Baroski, and so get pupils of their own among the British youths, or employment in the choruses of the theatres.

The prima donna of the little company was Amelia Larkins, Baroski's own articulated pupil, on whose future reputation the eminent master staked his own, whose profits he was to share, and whom he had farmed, to this end, from her father, a most respectable sheriff's officer's assistant, and now, by his daughter's exertions, a considerable capitalist. Amelia is blonde and blue-eyed, her complexion is as bright as snow, her ringlets of the colour of straw, her figure —— but why describe her figure ? Has not all the world seen her at the theatres royal and in America under the name of Miss Ligonier ?

Until Mrs. Walker arrived, Miss Larkins was the undisputed princess of the Baroski company—the Semiramide, the Rosina, the Tamina, the Donna Anna. Baroski vaunted her everywhere as the great rising genius of the day, bade Catalani look to her laurels, and questioned whether Miss Stephens could sing a ballad like his pupil. Mrs. Howard Walker arrived, and created, on the first occasion, no small sensation. She improved, and the little society became speedily divided into Walkerites and Larkinsians ; and between these two ladies (as, indeed, between Guzzard and Bulger before mentioned, between Miss Brunck and Miss Horsman, the two contraltos, and between the chorus-singers, after their kind) a great rivalry arose. Larkins was certainly the better singer ; but could her straw-

coloured curls and dumpy high-shouldered figure bear any comparison with the jetty ringlets and stately form of Morgiana? Did not Mrs. Walker, too, come to the music-lesson in her carriage, and with a black velvet gown and Cashmere shawl, while poor Larkins meekly stepped from Bell Yard, Temple Bar, in an old print gown and clogs, which she left in the hall? 'Larkins sing!' said Mrs. Crump, sarcastically; 'I'm sure she ought; her mouth's big enough to sing a duet.' Poor Larkins had no one to make epigrams in her behoof; her mother was at home tending the younger ones, her father abroad following the duties of his profession: she had but one protector, as she thought, and that one was Baroski. Mrs. Crump did not fail to tell Lumley Limpiter of her own former triumphs, and to sing him 'Tink-a-tink,' which we have previously heard, and to state how in former days she had been called the Ravenswing. And Lumley, on this hint, made a poem, in which he compared Morgiana's hair to the plumage of the Raven's wing, and Larkinissa's to that of the canary; by which two names the ladies began soon to be known in the school.

Ere long, the flight of the Ravenswing became evidently stronger, whereas that of the canary was seen evidently to droop. When Morgiana sang, all the room would cry 'bravo'; when Amelia performed, scarce a hand was raised for applause of her, except Morgiana's own, and that the Larkinses thought was lifted in odious triumph rather than in sympathy, for Miss L. was of an envious turn, and little understood the generosity of her rival.

At last, one day, the crowning victory of the Ravenswing came. In the trio of Baroski's own opera of *Eliogabalo*, 'Rosy lips and rosy wine,' Miss Larkins, who was evidently unwell, was taking the part of the English captive, which she had sung in public concerts before royal dukes, and with considerable applause, and, from some reason, performed it so ill, that Baroski, slapping down the music on the piano in a fury, cried, 'Mrs. Howard Walker, as Miss Larkins cannot sing to-day, will you favour us by taking the part of Boadicetta?' Mrs. Walker got up smilingly to obey—the triumph was too great to be withstood; and, as she advanced to the piano, Miss Larkins looked wildly at her, and stood silent for awhile, and at last shrieked out, '*Benjamin!*' in a tone of extreme agony, and dropped fainting down on

the ground. Benjamin looked extremely red, it must be confessed, at being thus called by what we shall denominate his Christian name, and Limpiter looked round at Guzzard, and Miss Brunck nudged Miss Horsman, and the lesson concluded rather abruptly that day, for Miss Larkins was carried off to the next room, laid on a couch, and sprinkled with water.

Good-natured Morgiana insisted that her mother should take Miss Larkins to Bell Yard in her carriage, and went herself home on foot ; but I don't know that this piece of kindness prevented Larkins from hating her. I should doubt if it did.

Hearing so much of his wife's skill as a singer, the astute Captain Walker determined to take advantage of it for the purpose of increasing his 'connexion.' He had Lumley Limpiter at his house before long, which was, indeed, no great matter, for honest Lum would go anywhere for a good dinner, and an opportunity to show off his voice afterwards, and Lumley was begged to bring any more clerks in the Treasury of his acquaintance ; Captain Guzzard was invited, and any officers of the Guards whom he might choose to bring ; Bulger received occasional cards ;—in a word, and after a short time, Mrs. Howard Walker's musical parties began to be considerably *suivies*. Her husband had the satisfaction to see his rooms filled by many great personages ; and once or twice in return (indeed, whenever she was wanted, or when people could not afford to hire the first singers) she was asked to parties elsewhere, and treated with that killing civility which our English aristocracy knows how to bestow on artists. Clever and wise aristocracy ! It is sweet to mark your ways, and study your commerce with inferior men.

I was just going to commence a tirade regarding the aristocracy here, and to rage against that cool assumption of superiority which distinguishes their lordships' commerce with artists of all sorts, that politeness which, if it condescend to receive artists at all, takes care to have them altogether, so that there can be no mistake about their rank—that august patronage of art which rewards it with a silly flourish of knighthood, to be sure, but takes *caré* to exclude it from any contact with its betters in society—I was, I say, just going to commence a tirade against the aristocracy for excluding artists from their company, and to be extremely

satirical upon them, for instance, for not receiving my friend Morgiana, when it suddenly came into my head to ask, was Mrs. Walker fit to move in the best society?—to which query it must humbly be replied that she was not. Her education was not such as to make her quite the equal of Baker Street. She was a kind, honest, and clever creature; but, it must be confessed, not refined. Wherever she went she had, if not the finest, at any rate the most showy gown in the room; her ornaments were the biggest; her hats, toques, berets, marabouts, and other fallals, always the most conspicuous. She drops ‘h’s’ here and there. I have seen her eat peas with a knife (and Walker, scowling on the opposite side of the table, striving in vain to catch her eye); and I shall never forget Lady Smigsmag’s horror when she asked for porter at dinner at Richmond, and began to drink it out of the pewter pot. It was a fine sight. She lifted up the tankard with one of the finest arms, covered with the biggest bracelets ever seen; and had a bird-of-paradise on her head, that curled round the pewter-disk of the pot as she raised it, like a halo. These peculiarities she had, and has still. She is best away from the genteel world, that is the fact. When she says that ‘The weather is so ‘ot that it is quite debilitating’; when she laughs, when she hits her neighbour at dinner on the side of the waistcoat (as she will if he should say anything that amuses her), she does what is perfectly natural and unaffected on her part, but what is not customarily done among polite persons, who can sneer at her odd manners and her vanity, but don’t know the kindness, honesty, and simplicity which distinguish her. This point being admitted, it follows, of course, that the tirade against the aristocracy would, in the present instance, be out of place—so it shall be reserved for some other occasion.

The Ravenswing was a person admirably disposed by nature to be happy. She had a disposition so kindly that any small attention would satisfy it; was pleased when alone; was delighted in a crowd; was charmed with a joke, however old; was always ready to laugh, to sing, to dance, or to be merry; was so tender-hearted that the smallest ballad would make her cry, and hence was supposed, by many persons, to be extremely affected, and by almost all, to be a downright coquette. Several competitors for her favour presented themselves besides Baroski. Young

dandies used to canter round her phaeton in the park, and might be seen haunting her doors in the mornings. The fashionable artist of the day made a drawing of her, which was engraved and sold in the shops ; a copy of it was printed in a song, 'Black-eyed Maiden of Araby,' the words by Desmond Mulligan, Esq., the music composed and dedicated to MRS. HOWARD WALKER, by her most faithful and obliged servant, Benjamin Baroski, and at night her Opera-box was full. Her Opera-box ? Yes, the heiress of the Boot-jack actually had an Opera-box, and some of the most fashionable manhood of London attended it.

Now, in fact, was the time of her greatest prosperity ; and her husband gathering these fashionable characters about him, extended his 'agency' considerably, and began to thank his stars that he had married a woman who was as good as a fortune to him.

In extending his agency, however, Mr. Walker increased his expenses proportionably, and multiplied his debts accordingly. More furniture and more plate, more wines and more dinner-parties, became necessary ; the little pony-phaeton was exchanged for a brougham of evenings ; and we may fancy our old friend Mr. Eglantine's rage and disgust, as he looked up from the pit of the Opera, to see Mrs. Walker surrounded by what he called 'the swell young nob's' about London, bowing to my lord, and laughing with his grace, and led to her carriage by Sir John.

The Ravenswing's position at this period was rather an exceptional one. She was an honest woman, visited by that peculiar class of our aristocracy who chiefly associate with ladies who are *not* honest. She laughed with all, but she encouraged none. Old Crump was constantly at her side now when she appeared in public, the most watchful of mammas, always awake at the Opera, though she seemed to be always asleep ; but no dandy debauchee could deceive her vigilance, and for this reason, Walker, who disliked her, as every man naturally will, must, and should dislike his mother-in-law, was contented to suffer her in his house to act as a *chaperon* to Morgiana.

None of the young dandies ever got admission of mornings to the little mansion in the Edgware Road ; the blinds were always down ; and though you might hear Morgiana's voice half across the Park as she was practising, yet the youthful hall-porter, in the sugar-loaf buttons, was instructed

to deny her, and always declared that his mistress was gone out, with the most admirable assurance.

After some two years of her life of splendour, there were, to be sure, a good number of morning visitors, who came with *single* knocks, and asked for Captain Walker, but these were no more admitted than the dandies aforesaid, and were referred, generally, to the captain's office, whither they went or not at their convenience. The only man who obtained admission into the house was Baroski, whose cab transported him thrice a week to the neighbourhood of Connaught Square, and who obtained ready entrance in his professional capacity.

But even then, and much to the wicked little music-master's disappointment, the dragon Crump was always at the piano with her endless worsted work, or else reading her unfailing *Sunday Times*; and Baroski could only employ 'de langvitch of de ice,' as he called it, with his fair pupil, who used to mimic his manner of rolling his eyes about afterwards, and perform 'Baroski in love' for the amusement of her husband and her mamma. The former had his reasons for overlooking the attentions of the little music-master; and as for the latter, had she not been on the stage, and had not many hundreds of persons, in jest or earnest, made love to her? What else can a pretty woman expect, who is much before the public? And so the worthy mother counselled her daughter to bear these attentions with good humour, rather than to make them a subject of perpetual alarm and quarrel.

Baroski, then, was allowed to go on being in love, and was never in the least disturbed in his passion; and if he was not successful, at least the little wretch could have the pleasure of *hinting* that he was, and looking particularly roguish when the Ravenswing was named, and assuring his friends at the club, that 'upon his vort dere vas no trut in dat rebort.'

At last one day it happened that Mrs. Crump did not arrive in time for her daughter's lesson (perhaps it rained, and the omnibus was full—a smaller circumstance than that has changed a whole life ere now)—Mrs. Crump did not arrive, and Baroski did, and Morgiana, seeing no great harm, sat down to her lesson as usual, and in the midst of it down went the music-master on his knees, and made a declaration in the most eloquent terms he could muster.

'Don't be a fool, Baroski!' said the lady (I can't help it if her language was not more choice, and if she did not rise with cold dignity, exclaiming, 'Unhand me, sir!')—'don't be a fool!' said Mrs. Walker, 'but get up and let's finish the lesson.'

'You hard-hearted adorable little creature, wil you not listen to me?'

'No, I vill not listen to you, Benjamin!' concluded the lady; 'get up and take a chair, and don't go on in that ridiklous way, don't!'

But Baroski, having a speech by heart, determined to deliver himself of it in that posture, and begged Morgiana not to turn away her divine hlice, and to listen to de voice of his despair, and so forth, and seized the lady's hand, and was going to press it to his lips, when she said, with more spirit, perhaps, than grace,—

'Leave go my hand, sir: I'll box your ears if you don't!'

But Baroski wouldn't release her hand, and was proceeding to imprint a kiss upon it, and Mrs. Crump, who had taken the omnibus at a quarter past twelve instead of that at twelve, had just opened the drawing-room door and was walking in, when Morgiana, turning as red as a peony, and unable to disengage her left hand which the musician held, raised up her right hand, and, with all her might and main, gave her lover such a tremendous slap in the face as caused him abruptly to release the hand which he held, and would have laid him prostrate on the carpet but for Mrs. Crump, who rushed forward and prevented him from falling by administering right and left a whole shower of slaps, such as he had never endured since the day he was at school.

'What, impurence!' said that worthy lady; 'you'll lay hands on my daughter, will you?' (one, two). 'You'll insult a woman in distress, will you, you little coward?' (one, two). 'Take that, and mind your manners, you filthy monster!'

Baroski bounced up in a fury. 'By Chofe, you shall hear of dis!' shouted he; 'you shall pay me dis!'

'As many more as you please, little Benjamin,' cried the widow. 'Augustus' (to the page), 'was that the captain's knock?' At this Baroski made for his ha'f. 'Augustus, show this impurence to the door, and, if he tries to come in again, call a policeman, do you hear?'

The music-master vanished very rapidly, and the two

ladies, instead of being frightened, or falling into hysterics, as their betters would have done, laughed at the odious monster's discomfiture, as they called him. 'Such a man as that set himself up against my Howard!' said Morgiana, with becoming pride; but it was agreed between them that Howard should know nothing of what had occurred for fear of quarrels, or lest he should be annoyed. So when he came home not a word was said; and only that his wife met him with more warmth than usual, you could not have guessed that anything extraordinary had occurred. It is not my fault that my heroine's sensibilities were not more keen, that she had not the least occasion for sal-volatile or symptom of a fainting fit; but so it was, and Mr. Howard Walker knew nothing of the quarrel between his wife and her instructor, until

Until he was arrested next day at the suit of Benjamin Baroski for two hundred and twenty guineas, and, in default of payment, was conducted by Mr. Tobias Larkins to his principal's lock-up house in Chancery Lane.

CHAPTER V

IN WHICH MR. WALKER FALLS INTO DIFFICULTIES, AND MRS. WALKER MAKES MANY FOOLISH ATTEMPTS TO RESCUE HIM

I HOPE the beloved reader is not silly enough to imagine that Mr. Walker, on finding himself insunged for debt in Chancery Lane, was so foolish as to think of applying to any of his friends (those great personages who have appeared every now and then in the course of this little history, and have served to give it a fashionable air). No, no; he knew the world too well: and that, though Billingsgate would give him as many dozen of claret as he could carry away under his belt, as the phrase is (I can't help it, Madam, if the phrase is not more genteel), and though Vauxhall would lend him his carriage, slap him on the back, and dine at his house; their lordships would have seen Mr. Walker depending from a beam in front of the Old Bailey rather than have helped him to a hundred pounds.

And why, forsooth, should we expect otherwise in the

world ? I observe that men who complain of its selfishness are quite as selfish as the world is, and no more liberal of money than their neighbours ; and I am quite sure with regard to Captain Walker that he would have treated a friend in want exactly as he when in want was treated. There was only his lady who in the least was afflicted by his captivity ; and as for the club, that went on, we are bound to say, exactly as it did on the day previous to his disappearance.

By the way, about clubs—could we not, but for fear of detaining the fair reader too long, enter into a wholesome dissertation here, on the manner of friendship established in those institutions, and the noble feeling of selfishness which they are likely to encourage in the male race ? I put out of the question the stale topics of complaint, such as leaving home, encouraging gormandizing, and luxurious habits, &c. ; but look also at the dealings of club-men with one another. Look at the rush for the evening paper ! See how Shiverton orders a fire in the dog-days, and Swettenham opens the windows in February. See how Cramley takes the whole breast of the turkey on his plate, and how many times Jenkins sends away his beggarly half-pint of sherry ! Clubbery is organized egotism. Club intimacy is carefully and wonderfully removed from friendship. You meet Smith for twenty years, exchange the day's news with him, laugh with him over the last joke, grow as well acquainted as two men may be together—and one day, at the end of the list of members of the club, you read in a little paragraph by itself, with all the honours,

MEMBER DECEASED.

Smith, John, Esq. ;

or he, on the other hand, has the advantage of reading your own name selected for a similar typographical distinction. There it is, that abominable little exclusive list at the end of every club-catalogue—you can't avoid it—I belong to eight clubs myself, and know that one year Fitz-Boodle, George Savage, Esq. (unless it should please fate to remove my brother and his six sons, when of course it would be Fitz-Boodle, Sir George Savage, Bart.), will appear in the dismal category. There is that list ; down I must go in it :—the day will come, and I shan't be seen in the bow-

window, some one else will be sitting in the vacant arm-chair : the rubber will begin as usual, and yet somehow Fitz will not be there. 'Where's Fitz?' says Trumpington, just arrived from the Rhine. 'Don't you know?' says Punter, turning down his thumb to the carpet. 'You led the club, I think?' says Ruff to his partner (the *other* partner !), and the waiter snuffs the candles.

I hope in the course of the above little pause, every single member of a club who reads this has profited by the perusal. He may belong, I say, to eight clubs, he will die and not be missed by any of the five thousand members. Peace be to him ; the waiters will forget him, and his name will pass away, and another great-coat will hang on the hook whence his own used to be dependent.

And this I need not say is the beauty of the club-institutions. If it were otherwise,—if forsooth we were to be sorry when our friends died, or to draw our purses when our friends were in want, we should be insolvent, and life would be miserable. Be it ours to button up our pockets and our hearts ; and to make merry—it is enough to swim down this life-stream for ourselves ; if Poverty is clutching hold of our heels, or Friendship would catch an arm, kick them both off. Every man for himself, is the word, and plenty to do too.

My friend Captain Walker had practised the above maxims so long and resolutely as to be quite aware when he came himself to be in distress, that not a single soul in the whole universe would help him, and he took his measures accordingly.

When carried to Mr. Bendigo's lock-up house, he summoned that gentleman in a very haughty way, took a blank banker's cheque out of his pocket-book, and filling it up for the exact sum of the writ, orders Mr. Bendigo forthwith to open the door and let him go forth.

Mr. Bendigo, smiling with exceeding archness, and putting a finger covered all over with diamond rings to his extremely aquiline nose, inquired of Mr. Walker whether he saw anything green about his face ? intimating by this gay and good-humoured interrogatory his suspicion of the unsatisfactory nature of the document handed over to him by Mr. Walker.

'Hang it, sir!' says Mr. Walker, 'go and get the cheque cashed, and be quick about it. Send your man in a cab, and here's a half-crown to pay for it.' The confident air somewhat staggers the bailiff, who asked him whether he would like any refreshment while his man was absent getting the amount of the cheque, and treats his prisoner with great civility during the time of the messenger's journey.

But as Captain Walker had but a balance of two pounds five and twopence (this sum was afterwards divided among his creditors, the law-expenses being previously deducted from it), the bankers of course declined to cash the captain's draft for two hundred and odd pounds, simply writing the words 'No effects' on the paper; on receiving which reply Walker, far from being cast down, burst out laughing very gaily, produced a real five-pound note, and called upon his host for a bottle of champagne, which the two worthies drank in perfect friendship and good humour. The bottle was scarcely finished, and the young Israelitish gentleman who acts as waiter in Cursitor Street had only time to remove the flask and the glasses, when poor Morgiana with a flood of tears rushed into her husband's arms, and flung herself on his neck, and calling him her 'dearest, blessed Howard,' would have fainted at his feet; but that he, breaking out in a fury of oaths, asked her how, after getting him into that scrape through her infernal extravagance, she dared to show her face before him? This address speedily frightened the poor thing out of her fainting fit—there is nothing so good for female hysterics as a little conjugal sternness, nay brutality, as many husbands can aver who are in the habit of employing the remedy.

'My extravagance, Howard?' said she, in a faint way; and quite put off her purpose of swooning by the sudden attack made upon her—'Surely, my love, you have nothing to complain of—'

'To complain of, ma'am?' roared the excellent Walker. 'Is two hundred guineas to a music-master nothing to complain of? Did you bring me such a fortune as to authorize your taking guinea lessons? Haven't I raised you out of your sphere of life and introduced you to the best of the land? Haven't I dressed you like a duchess? Haven't I been for you such a husband as very few women in the world ever had, madam—answer me that?'

‘Indeed, Howard, you were always very kind,’ sobbed the lady.

‘Haven’t I toiled and slaved for you,—been out all day working for you ? Haven’t I allowed your vulgar old mother to come to your house—to my house, I say ? Haven’t I done all this ?’

She could not deny it, and Walker, who was in a rage (and when a man is in a rage, for what on earth is a wife made for but that he should vent his rage on her ?), continued for some time in this strain, and so abused, frightened, and overcame poor Morgiana, that she left her husband fully convinced that she was the most guilty of beings, and bemoaning his double bad fortune that her Howard was ruined and she the cause of his misfortunes.

When she was gone, Mr. Walker resumed his equanimity (for he was not one of those men whom a few months of the King’s Bench were likely to terrify), and drank several glasses of punch in company with his host, with whom in perfect calmness he talked over his affairs. That he intended to pay his debt and quit the spunging-house next day is a matter of course ; no one ever was yet put in a spunging-house that did not pledge his veracity he intended to quit it to-morrow. Mr. Bendigo said he should be heartily glad to open the door to him, and in the meantime sent out diligently to see among his friends if there were any more detainers against the Captain, and to inform the Captain’s creditors to come forward against him.

Morgiana went home in profound grief it may be imagined, and could hardly refrain from bursting into tears, when the sugar-loaf page asked whether master was coming home early, or whether he had taken his key ; and lay awake tossing and wretched the whole night, and very early in the morning rose up, and dressed, and went out.

Before nine o’clock she was in Cursitor Street ; and once more joyfully bounced into her husband’s arms, who woke up yawning and swearing somewhat, with a severe headache, occasioned by the jollification of the previous night ; for, strange though it may seem, there are perhaps no places in Europe where jollity is more practised than in prisons for debt ; and I declare for my own part (I mean, of course, that I went to visit a friend) I have dined at Mr. Aminadab’s as sumptuously as at Long’s.

But it is necessary to account for Morgiana’s joyfulness,

which was strange in her husband's perplexity, and after her sorrow of the previous night. Well, then, when Mrs. Walker went out in the morning, as she did with a very large basket under her arm, 'Shall I carry the basket, ma'am?' said the page, seizing it with much alacrity.

'No, thank you,' cried his mistress, with equal eagerness: 'it's only——'

'Of course, ma'am,' replied the boy, sneering. 'I knew it was that.'

'Glass,' continued Mrs. Walker, turning extremely red. 'Have the goodness to call a coach, sir, and not to speak till you are questioned.'

The young gentleman disappeared upon his errand: the coach was called and came. Mrs. Walker slipped into it with her basket, and the page went downstairs to his companions in the kitchen, and said, 'It's a comin'! master's in quod, and missus has gone out to pawn the plate.' When the cook went out that day, she somehow had by mistake placed in her basket a dozen of table-knives and a plated egg-stand. When the lady's-maid took a walk in the course of the afternoon, she found she had occasion for eight cambric pocket-handkerchiefs (marked with her mistress's cipher), half a dozen pair of shoes, gloves, long and short, some silk stockings, and a gold-headed scent-bottle. 'Both the new cashmeres is gone,' said she, 'and there's nothing left in Mrs. Walker's trinket-box but a paper of pins and an old coral bracelet.' As for the page, he rushed incontinently to his master's dressing-room and examined every one of the pockets of his clothes: made a parcel of some of them, and opened all the drawers which Walker had not locked before his departure. He only found three-halfpence and a bill-stamp, and about forty-five tradesmen's accounts, neatly labelled and tied up with red tape. These three worthies, a groom, who was a great admirer of Trimmer the lady's-maid, and a policeman, a friend of the cook's, sat down to a comfortable dinner at the usual hour, and it was agreed among them all that Walker's ruin was certain. The cook made the policeman a present of a china punch-bowl which Mrs. Walker had given her; and the lady's-maid gave her friend the *Book of Beauty* for last year, and the third volume of Byron's poems from the drawing-room table.

'I'm dash'd if she ain't taken the little French clock,

too,' said the page, and so indeed Mrs. Walker had ; it slipped in the basket where it lay enveloped in one of her shawls, and then struck madly and unnaturally a great number of times, as Morgiana was lifting her store of treasures out of the hackney-coach. The coachman wagged his head sadly as he saw her walking as quick as she could under her heavy load, and disappearing round the corner of the street at which Mr. Balls's celebrated jewellery establishment is situated. It is a grand shop, with magnificent silver cups and salvers, rare gold-headed canes, flutes, watches, diamond brooches, and a few fine specimens of the old masters in the window, and under the words—

BALLS, JEWELLER,

you read,

Money Lent.

in the very smallest type, on the door.

The interview with Mr. Balls need not be described, but it must have been a satisfactory one, for at the end of half an hour, Morgiana returned and bounded into the coach with sparkling eyes, and told the driver to *gallop* to Cursitor Street, which, smiling, he promised to do : and accordingly set off in that direction at the rate of four miles an hour. 'I thought so,' said the philosophic charioteer. 'When a man's in quod, a woman don't mind her silver spoons ;' and he was so delighted with her action, that he forgot to grumble when she came to settle accounts with him, even though she gave him only double his fare.

'Take me to him,' said she to the young Hebrew who opened the door.

'To whom ?' says the sarcastic youth ; 'there's twenty *hims* here. You're precious early.'

'To Captain Walker, young man,' replied Morgiana, haughtily, whereupon the youth opening the second door, and seeing Mr. Bendigo in a flowered dressing-gown descending the stairs, exclaimed, 'Papa, here's a lady for the Captain.' 'I'm come to free him,' said she, trembling and holding out a bundle of bank-notes. 'Here's the amount of your claim, sir—two hundred and twenty pounds, as you told me last night ;' and the Jew took the notes, and grinned as he looked at her, and grinned double as he looked at his son, and begged Mrs. Walker to step into his study and take a receipt. When the door of that

apartment closed upon the lady and his father, Mr. Bendigo the younger fell back in an agony of laughter, which it is impossible to describe in words, and presently ran out into a court where some of the luckless inmates of the house were already taking the air, and communicated something to them which made those individuals also laugh as uproariously as he had previously done.

Well, after joyfully taking the receipt from Mr. Bendigo (how her cheeks flushed and her heart fluttered as she dried it on the blotting-book !), and after turning very pale again on hearing that the Captain had had a very bad night : 'And well he might, poor dear !' said she (at which Mr. Bendigo, having no person to grin at, grinned at a marble bust of Mr. Pitt, which ornamented his side-board). Morgiana, I say, these preliminaries being concluded, was conducted to her husband's apartment, and once more flinging her arms round her dearest Howard's neck, told him with one of the sweetest smiles in the world to make haste and get up and come home, for breakfast was waiting and the carriage at the door.

'What do you mean, love ?' said the Captain, starting up and looking exceedingly surprised.

'I mean that my dearest is free ; that the odious little creature is paid—at least the horrid bailiff is.'

'Have you been to Baroski ?' said Walker, turning very red.

'Howard !' said his wife, quite indignant.

'Did—did your mother give you the money ?' asked the Captain.

'No ; I had it by me,' replies Mrs. Walker, with a very knowing look.

Walker was more surprised than ever. 'Have you any more money by you ?' said he.

Mrs. Walker showed him her purse with two guineas ; 'That is all, love,' she said. 'And I wish,' continued she, 'you would give me a draft to pay a whole list of little bills that have somehow all come in within the last few days.'

'Well, well, you shall have the cheque,' continued Mr. Walker, and began forthwith to make his toilet, which completed, he rang for Mr. Bendigo, and his bill, and intimated his wish to go home directly.

The honoured bailiff brought the bill, but with regard to his being free, said it was impossible.

‘How impossible?’ said Mrs. Walker, turning very red and then very pale. ‘Did I not pay just now?’

‘So you did, and you’ve got the reshipt; but there’s another detainer against the Captain for a hundred and fifty. Eglantine and Mossrose, of Bond Street;—perfumery for five years, you know.’

‘You don’t mean to say you were such a fool as to pay without asking if there were any more detainers?’ roared Walker to his wife.

‘Yes, she was though,’ chuckled Mr. Bendigo; ‘but she’ll know better the next time: and, besides, Captain, what’s a hundred and fifty pounds to you?’

Though Walker desired nothing so much in the world at that moment as the liberty to knock down his wife, his sense of prudence overcame his desire for justice, if that feeling may be called prudence on his part which consisted in a strong wish to cheat the bailiff into the idea that he (Walker) was an exceedingly respectable and wealthy man. Many worthy persons indulge in this fond notion, that they are imposing upon the world; strive to fancy, for instance, that their bankers consider them men of property because they keep a tolerable balance, pay little tradesmen’s bills with ostentatious punctuality, and so forth,—but the world, let us be pretty sure, is as wise as need be, and guesses our real condition with a marvellous instinct, or learns it with curious skill. The London tradesman is one of the keenest judges of human nature extant; and if a tradesman, how much more a bailiff? though, in reply to the ironic question, ‘What’s a hundred and fifty pounds to you?’ Walker, collecting himself, answers, ‘It is an infamous imposition, and I owe the money no more than you do, but, nevertheless, I shall instruct my lawyers to pay it in the course of the morning, under protest of course.’

‘Oh, of course,’ said Mr. Bendigo, bowing and quitting the room, and leaving Mrs. Walker to the pleasure of a *tête-à-tête* with her husband.

And now being alone with the partner of his bosom, the worthy gentleman began an address to her which cannot be put down on paper here; because the world is exceedingly squeamish, and does not care to hear the whole truth about rascals, and because the fact is that almost every other word of the Captain’s speech was a curse, such as would shock the beloved reader were it put in print.

[‘—— it, madam,’ began he, ‘I always thought you a fool, but not such a —— fool as this, —— you ; —— my eyes, you’re enough to drive me mad with your ——’ . . .

Now; you see it is quite impossible to report such a conversation word for word ; and I am pretty sure, *au reste*, that the Editor of the Magazine would draw his pen through every line of it.]¹

Fancy, then, in lieu of the conversation, a scoundrel disappointed and in a fury, wreaking his brutal revenge upon an amiable woman, who sits trembling and pale, and wondering at this sudden exhibition of wrath. Fancy how he clenches his fists and stands over her, and stamps and screams out curses with a livid face, growing wilder and wilder in his rage ; wrenching her hand when she wants to turn away, and only stopping at last when she has fallen off the chair in a fainting fit, with a heart-breaking sob that made the Jew-boy who was listening at the key-hole turn quite pale and walk away. Well, it *is* best, perhaps, that such a conversation should not be told at length :—at the end of it, when Mr. Walker had his wife lifeless on the floor, he seizes a water-jug and poured it over her, which operation pretty soon brought her to herself, and shaking her black ringlets, she looked up once more again timidly into his face, and took his hand, and began to cry.

He spoke now in a somewhat softer voice : and let her keep paddling on with his hand as before ; he *couldn't* speak very fiercely to the poor girl in her attitude of defeat, and tenderness, and supplication. ‘Morgiana,’ said he, ‘your extravagance and carelessness have brought me to ruin, I’m afraid. If you’d chosen to have gone to Baroski, a word from you would have made him withdraw the writ ; and my property wouldn’t have been sacrificed as it has now been for nothing. It mayn’t be yet too late, however, to retrieve ourselves. This bill of Eglantine’s is a regular conspiracy, I am sure, between Mossrose and Bendigo here : you must go to Eglantine—he’s an old— an old flame of yours, you know.’

She dropped his hand ; ‘I can’t go to Eglantine after what has passed between us,’ she said ; but Walker’s face instantly began to wear a certain look, and she said with a shudder, ‘Well, well, dear, I *will* go.’ ‘You will go to Eglantine, and ask him to take a bill for the amount of

¹ Omitted in later editions.

this shameful demand—at any date, never mind what. Mind, however, to see him alone, and I'm sure if you choose you can settle the business. Make haste; set off directly, and come back, as there may be more detainers in.'

Trembling, and in a great flutter, Morgiana put on her bonnet and gloves and went towards the door. 'It's a fine morning,' said Mr. Walker, looking out; 'a walk will do you good; and—Morgiana—didn't you say you had a couple of guineas in your pocket?'

'Here it is,' said she, smiling all at once, and holding up her face to be kissed. She paid the two guineas for the kiss. Was it not a mean act? 'Is it possible that people can love where they do not respect?' says Miss Prim: '*I* never would.' Nobody asked you, Miss Prim: but recollect Morgiana was not born with your advantages of education and breeding; and was, in fact, a poor vulgar creature, who loved Mr. Walker, not because her mamma told her, nor because he was an exceedingly eligible and well-brought-up young man; but because she could not help it, and knew no better. Nor is Mrs. Walker set up as a model of virtue: ah no! when I want a model of virtue I will call in Baker Street, and ask for a sitting of my dear (if I may be permitted to say so) Miss Prim.

We have Mr. Howard Walker safely housed in Mr. Bendigo's establishment in Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane; and it looks like mockery and want of feeling towards the excellent hero of this story, or, as should rather be said, towards the husband of the heroine, to say what he *might* have been but for the unlucky little circumstance of Baroski's passion for Morgiana.

If Baroski had not fallen in love with Morgiana, he would not have given her two hundred guineas' worth of lessons, he would not have so far presumed as to seize her hand and attempt to kiss it; if he had not attempted to kiss her, she would not have boxed his ears; he would not have taken out the writ against Walker; Walker would have been free, very possibly rich, and therefore certainly respected; he always said that a month's more liberty would have set him beyond the reach of misfortune.

The assertion is very likely a correct one: for Walker had a flashy, enterprising genius, which ends in wealth sometimes, in the King's Bench not seldom, occasionally, alas, in Van Diemen's Land! He might have been rich,

could he have kept his credit, and had not his personal expenses and extravagances pulled him down. He had gallantly availed himself of his wife's fortune ; nor could any man in London, as he proudly said, have made five hundred pounds go so far. He had, as we have seen, furnished a house, sideboard, and cellar with it ; he had a carriage, and horses in his stable, and with the remainder he had purchased shares in four companies—of three of which he was founder and director, had conducted innumerable bargains in the foreign stocks, had lived and entertained sumptuously, and made himself a very considerable income. He had set up THE CAPITOL Loan and Life Assurance Company, had discovered the Chimborazo gold mines, and the Society for Recovering and Draining the Pontine Marshes ; capital ten millions ; patron, HIS HOLINESS THE POPE. It certainly was stated in an evening paper that his Holiness had made him a Knight of the Spur, and had offered to him the rank of Count ; and he was raising a loan for His Highness the Cacique of Panama, who has sent him (by way of dividend) the grand cordon of his Highness's Order of the Castle and Falcon, which might be seen any day at his office in Bond Street, with the parchments signed and sealed by the Grand Marshal and Falcon King-at-Arms of his Highness. In a week more, Walker would have raised a hundred thousand pounds, on his Highness's twenty per cent. loan ; he would have had fifteen thousand pounds commission for himself ; his companies would have risen to par, he would have realized his shares ; he would have gone into Parliament, he would have been made a baronet, who knows ? a peer, probably ! ' And I appeal to you, sir,' Walker would say to his friends, ' could any man have shown better proof of his affection for his wife, than by laying out her little miserable money as I did ? They call me heartless, sir, because I didn't succeed ; sir, my life has been a series of sacrifices for that woman, such as no man ever performed before.'

A proof of Walker's dexterity and capability for business may be seen in the fact that he had actually appeased and reconciled one of his bitterest enemies—our honest friend Eglantine. After Walker's marriage, Eglantine, who had now no mercantile dealings with his former agent became so enraged with him, that, as the only means of revenge in his power, he sent him in his bill for goods supplied to the

amount of one hundred and fifty guineas, and sued him for the amount. But Walker stepped boldly over to his enemy, and in the course of half an hour they were friends.

Eglantine promised to forgo his claim; and accepted in lieu of it three 100*l.* shares of the ex-Panama stock, bearing 25 per cent., payable half-yearly at the house of Hocus Brothers, St. Swithin's Lane; three 100*l.* shares, the *second* class of the order of the Castle and Falcon, with the riband and badge. 'In four years, Eglantine, my boy, I hope to get you the Grand Cordon of the Order,' said Walker; 'I hope to see you a KNIGHT GRAND CROSS: with a grant of a hundred thousand acres reclaimed from the Isthmus.'

To do my poor Eglantine justice, he did not care for the hundred thousand acres—it was the star that delighted him;—ah! how his fat chest heaved with delight as he sewed on the cross and riband to his dress coat; and lighted up four wax candles and looked at himself in the glass. He was known to wear a great-coat after that—it was that he might wear the cross under it. That year he went on a trip to Boulogne. He was dreadfully ill during the voyage, but as the vessel entered the port he was seen to emerge from the cabin, his coat open, the star blazing on his chest; the soldiers saluted him as he walked the streets, he was called Monsieur le Chevalier, and when he went home he entered into negotiations with Walker, to purchase a commission in his Highness's service. Walker said he would get the nominal rank of Captain, the fees at the Panama *War Office* were five-and-twenty pounds, which sum honest Eglantine produced, and had his commission, and a pack of visiting cards printed as Captain Archibald Eglantine, K.C.F. Many a time he looked at them as they lay in his desk, and he kept the cross in his dressing-table, and wore it as he shaved every morning.

His Highness the Cacique, it is well known, came to England, and had lodgings in Regent Street, where he held a levee, at which Eglantine appeared in the Panama uniform, and was most graciously received by his Sovereign. His Highness proposed to make Captain Eglantine his aide de camp with the rank of Colonel, but the Captain's exchequer was rather low at that moment, and the fees at the 'War Office' were peremptory. Meanwhile his Highness left Regent Street, was said by some to have returned

to Panama, by others to be in his native city of Cork, by others to be leading a life of retirement in the New Cut, Lambeth; at any rate was not visible for some time, so that Captain Eglantine's advancement did not take place. Eglantine was somehow ashamed to mention his military and chivalric rank to Mr. Mossrose, when that gentleman came into partnership with him; and left these facts secret until they were detected by a very painful circumstance.

On the very day when Walker was arrested at the suit of Benjamin Baroski, there appeared in the newspapers an account of the imprisonment of his Highness the Prince of Panama, for a bill owing to a licensed victualler in Ratcliff Highway. The magistrate to whom the victualler subsequently came to complain, passed many pleasantries on the occasion. He asked whether his Highness did not drink like a swan with two necks; whether he had brought any Belles savages with him from Panama, and so forth; and the whole court, said the report, 'was convulsed with laughter, when Boniface produced a green and yellow riband with a large star of the Order of the Castle and Falcon, with which his Highness proposed to gratify him, in lieu of paying his little bill.'

It was as he was reading the above document with a bleeding heart that Mr. Mossrose came in from his daily walk to the City. 'Vell, Eglantine,' says he, 'have you heard the newsh?'

'About his Highness?'

'About your friend Valker; he's arrested for two hundred poundsh?'

Eglantine at this could contain no more; but told his story of how he had been induced to accept 300*l.* of Panama stock for his account against Walker, and cursed his stars for his folly.

'Vell, you've only to bring in another bill,' said the younger perfumer; 'swear he owes you a hundred and fifty pounds, and we'll have a writ out against him this afternoon.'

And so a second writ was taken out against Captain Walker.

'You'll have his wife here very likely in a day or two,' said Mr. Mossrose to his partner; 'them chaps always sends their wives, and I hope you know how to deal with her.'

'I don't value her a fig's hend,' said Eglantine. 'I'll

treat her like the dust of the hearth. After that woman's conduct to me, I should like to see her have the haudacity to come here ; and if she does, you'll see how I'll serve her.'

The worthy perfumer was, in fact, resolved to be exceedingly hard-hearted, in his behaviour towards his old love, and acted over at night in bed the scene which was to occur when the meeting should take place. Oh, thought he, but it will be a grand thing to see the proud Morgiana on her knees to me ; and me a-pointing to the door ; and saying, 'Madam, you've steeled this 'eart against you, you have ;—bury the recollection of old times, of those old times when I thought my 'eart would have broke, but it didn't—no, 'earts are made of sterner stuff. I didn't die as I thought I should ; I stood it, and live to see the woman I despised at my feet—ha, ha, at my feet !'

In the midst of these thoughts Mr. Eglantine fell asleep ; but it was evident that the idea of seeing Morgiana once more, agitated him considerably, else why should he have been at the pains of preparing so much heroism ? His sleep was exceedingly fitful and troubled ; he saw Morgiana in a hundred shapes ; he dreamed that he was dressing her hair ; that he was riding with her to Richmond ; that the horse turned into a dragon, and Morgiana into Woolsey, who took him by the throat and choked him, while the dragon played the key-bugle. And in the morning when Mossrose was gone to his business in the City, and he sat reading the *Morning Post* in his study, ah ! what a thump his heart gave as the lady of his dreams actually stood before him !

Many a lady who purchased brushes at Eglantine's shop, would have given ten guineas for such a colour as his when he saw her. His heart beat violently, he was almost choking in his stays—he had been prepared for the visit, but his courage failed him now it had come. They were both silent for some minutes.

'You know what I am come for,' at last said Morgiana from under her veil, but she put it aside as she spoke.

'I—that is—yes—it's a painful affair, mem,' he said, giving one look at her pale face, and then turning away in a flurry. 'I beg to refer you to Blunt, Hone & Sharpes, my lawyers, mem,' he added, collecting himself.

'I didn't expect this from *you*, Mr. Eglantine,' said the lady, and began to sob.

'And after what's 'appened, I didn't expect a visit from *you*, mem. I thought Mrs. Captling Walker was too great a dame to visit poor Harchibald Eglantine (though some of the first men in the country *do* visit him). Is there anything in which I can oblige you, mem?'

'O heavens!' cried the poor woman, 'have I no friend left? I never thought that you, too, would have deserted me, Mr. Archibald.'

The 'Archibald,' pronounced in the old way, had evidently an effect on the perfumer; he winced and looked at her very eagerly for a moment. 'What can I do for you, mem?' at last said he.

'What is this bill against Mr. Walker, for which he is now in prison?'

'Perfumery supplied for five years; that man used more 'airbrushes than any duke in the land, and as for eau de Cologne he must have bathed himself in it. He hordered me about like a lord. He never paid me one shilling,—he stabbed me in my most vital part—but, ah! ah! never mind *that*: and I said I would be revenged, and I *am*.'

The perfumer was quite in a rage again by this time, and wiped his fat face with his pocket-handkerchief, and glared upon Mrs. Walker with a most determined air.

'Revenged on whom? Archibald—Mr. Eglantine, revenged on me—on a poor woman whom you made miserable. You would not have done so once.'

'Ha! and a precious way you treated me *once*,' said Eglantine; 'don't talk to me, mem, of *once*. Bury the recollection of once for hever! I thought my 'eart would have broke once, but no; 'earts are made of sterner stuff. I didn't die as I thought I should; I stood it—and I live to see the woman who despised me at my feet.'

'Oh, Archibald!' was all the lady could say, and she fell to sobbing again; it was perhaps her best argument with the perfumer.

'Oh, Harchibald, indeed!' continued he, beginning to swell; 'don't call me Harchibald, Morgiana. Think what a position you might have held, if you'd chose: when, when—you *might* have called me Harchibald. Now it's no use,' added he, with harrowing pathos; 'but, though I've been wronged, I can't bear to see women in tears—tell me what I can do?'

'Dear, good Mr. Eglantine, send to your lawyers and stop

this horrid prosecution—take Mr. Walker's acknowledgement for the debts. If he is free, he is sure to have a very large sum of money in a few days, and will pay you all. Do not ruin him—do not ruin me by persisting now. Be the old kind Eglantine you were.'

Eglantine took a hand, which Morgiana did not refuse; he thought about old times. He had known her since childhood almost; as a girl he dandled her on his knee at the Kidneys; as a woman he had adored her,—his heart was melted.

'He did pay me in a sort of way,' reasoned the perfumer with himself—'these bonds, though they are not worth much, I took 'em for better or for worse, and I can't bear to see her crying, and to trample on a woman in distress. Morgiana,' he added, in a loud cheerful voice, 'cheer up; I'll give you a release for your husband: I *will* be the old kind Eglantine I was.'

'Be the old kind jackass you vash!' here roared a voice that made Mr. Eglantine start. 'Vy, vat an old fat fool you are, Eglantine, to give up our just debts because a voman comes snivelling and crying to you—and such a voman, too!' exclaimed Mr. Mossrose, for his was the voice.

'Such a woman, sir?' cried the senior partner.

'Yes; such a woman—vy didn't she jilt you herself?—hasn't she been trying the same game with Baroski; and are you so green as to give up a hundred and fifty pounds because she takes a fancy to come vimpering here? I won't, I can tell you. The money's as much mine as it is yours, and I'll have it, or keep Walker's body, that's what I will.'

At the presence of his partner, the timid good genius of Eglantine which had prompted him to mercy and kindness, at once outspread its frightened wings and flew away.

'You see how it is, Mrs. W.,' said he, looking down; 'it's an affair of business—in all these here affairs of business Mr. Mossrose is the managing man; ain't you, Mr. Mossrose?'

'A pretty business it would be if I wasn't,' replied Mossrose, doggedly. 'Come, ma'am,' says he, 'I'll tell you vat I do: I take fifty per shent; not a farthing less—give me that, and out your husband goes.'

'Oh, sir, Howard will pay you in a week.'

'Vell, den let him stop at my uncle Bendigo's for a week, and come out den—he's very comfortable there,' said Shylock with a grin. 'Hadn't you better go to the shop,

Mr. Eglantine,' continued he, 'and look after your business ; Mrs. Walker can't want you to listen to her all day.'

Eglantine was glad of the excuse, and slunk out of the studio, not into the shop but into his parlour ; where he drank off a great glass of maraschino ; and sat blushing and exceedingly agitated, until Mossrose came to tell him that Mrs. W. was gone, and wouldn't trouble him any more. But although he drank several more glasses of maraschino, and went to the play that night, and to the Cider-cellars afterwards, neither the liquor, nor the play, nor the delightful comic songs at the cellars, could drive Mrs. Walker out of his head, and the memory of old times, and the image of her pale weeping face.

Morgiana tottered out of the shop, scarcely heeding the voice of Mr. Mossrose, who said, 'I'll take forty per shent' (and went back to his duty cursing himself for a soft-hearted fool for giving up so much of his rights to a puling woman). Morgiana, I say, tottered out of the shop, and went up Conduit Street, weeping, weeping with all her eyes. She was quite faint, for she had taken nothing that morning but the glass of water which the pastrycook in the Strand had given her, and was forced to take hold of the railings of a house for support, just as a little gentleman with a yellow handkerchief under his arm was issuing from the door.

'Good heavens, Mrs. Walker !' said the gentleman, it was no other than Mr. Woolsey, who was going forth to try a body coat for a customer, 'are you ill ?—what's the matter ? for God's sake come in !' and he took her arm under his, and led her into his back-parlour, and seated her, and had some wine-and-water before her in one minute, before she had said one single word regarding herself.

As soon as she was somewhat recovered, and with the interruption of a thousand sobs, the poor thing told as well as she could her little story. Mr. Eglantine had arrested Mr. Walker : she had been trying to gain time for him, Eglantine had refused.

'The hard-hearted, cowardly brute to refuse *her* anything !' said loyal Mr. Woolsey. • 'My dear,' says he, 'I've no reason to love your husband, and I know too much about him to respect him ; but I love and respect *you*, and will spend my last shilling to serve you.' At which Morgiana could only take his hand and cry a great deal more than

ever. She said Mr. Walker would have a great deal of money in a week, that he was the best of husbands, and she was sure Mr. Woolsey would think better of him when he knew him; that Mr. Eglantine's bill was one hundred and fifty pounds, but that Mr. Mossrose would take forty per cent., if Mr. Woolsey could say how much that was.

'I'll pay a thousand pound to do you good,' said Mr. Woolsey, bouncing up; 'stay here for ten minutes, my dear, until my return, and all shall be right, as you will see.' He was back in ten minutes, and had called a cab from the stand opposite (all the coachmen there had seen and commented on Mrs. Walker's woebegone looks), and they were off for Cursitor Street in a moment. 'They'll settle the whole debt for twenty pounds,' said he, and showed an order to that effect from Mr. Mossrose to Mr. Bendigo's, empowering the latter to release Walker on receiving Mr. Woolsey's acknowledgement for the above sum.

'There's no use paying it,' said Mr. Walker, doggedly, 'it would only be robbing you, Mr. Woolsey—seven more detainees have come in while my wife has been away. I must go through the court now; but,' he added in a whisper to the tailor, 'my good sir, my debts of *honour* are sacred, and if you will have the goodness to lend *me* the twenty pounds, I pledge you my word as a gentleman to return it when I come out of quod.'

It is probable that Mr. Woolsey declined this; for as soon as he was gone, Walker, in a tremendous fury, began cursing his wife for dawdling three hours on the road. 'Why the deuce, ma'am, didn't you take a cab?' roared he, when he heard she had walked to Bond Street. 'Those writs have only been in half an hour, and I might have been off but for you.'

'Oh, Howard,' said she, 'didn't you take—didn't I give you my—my last shilling?' and fell back and wept again more bitterly than ever.

'Well, love,' said her amiable husband, turning rather red; 'never mind, it wasn't your fault. It is but going through the court. It is no great odds. I forgive you.'

CHAPTER VI

IN WHICH MR. WALKER STILL REMAINS IN DIFFICULTIES, BUT
SHOWS GREAT RESIGNATION UNDER HIS MISFORTUNES

THE exemplary Walker, seeing that escape from his enemies was hopeless, and that it was his duty as a man to turn on them and face them, now determined to quit the splendid though narrow lodgings which Mr. Bendigo had provided for him, and undergo the martyrdom of the Fleet. Accordingly in company with that gentleman, he came over to her Majesty's prison, and gave himself into the custody of the officers there; and did not apply for the accommodation of the rules (by which in those days the captivity of some debtors was considerably lightened), because he knew perfectly well that there was no person in the wide world who would give a security for the heavy sums for which Walker was answerable. What these sums were is no matter, and on this head we do not think it at all necessary to satisfy the curiosity of the reader. He may have owed hundreds—thousands, his creditors only can tell; he paid the dividend which has been formerly mentioned, and showed thereby his desire to satisfy all claims upon him to the uttermost farthing.

As for the little house in Connaught Square, when, after quitting her husband, Morgiana drove back thither, the door was opened by the page, who instantly thanked her to pay his wages; and in the drawing-room, on a yellow satin sofa, sat a seedy man (with a pot of porter beside him placed on an album for fear of staining the rosewood table), and the seedy man signified that he had taken possession of the furniture in execution for a judgement debt. Another seedy man was in the dining-room, reading a newspaper and drinking gin; he informed Mrs. Walker that he was the representative of another judgement debt and of another execution:—'There's another on 'em in the kitchen,' said the page, 'taking an inventory of the furniture; and he swears he'll have you took up for swindling, for pawning the plate.'

'Sir,' said Mr. Woolsey, for that worthy man had conducted Morgiana home, 'sir,' said he, shaking his stick at the young page, 'if you give any more of your impudence

I'll beat every button off your jacket : ' and as there were some four hundred of these ornaments, the page was silent. It was a great mercy for Morgiana that the honest and faithful tailor had accompanied her. The good fellow had waited very patiently for her for an hour in the parlour or coffee-room of the lock-up house, knowing full well that she would want a protector on her way homewards ; and his kindness will be more appreciated when it is stated that during the time of his delay in the coffee-room he had been subject to the entreaties, nay, to the insults of Cornet Fipkin of the Blues, who was in prison at the suit of Linsey, Woolsey & Co., and who happened to be taking his breakfast in the apartment when his obdurate creditor entered it. The cornet (a hero of eighteen, who stood at least five feet three in his boots, and owed fifteen thousand pounds) was so enraged at the obduracy of his creditor that he said he would have thrown him out of the window but for the bars which guarded it ; and entertained serious thoughts of knocking the tailor's head off, but that the latter, putting his right leg forward and his fists in a proper attitude, told the young officer to ' come on ' ; on which the cornet cursed the tailor for a ' snob,' and went back to his breakfast. [The cornet subsequently took benefit of the act, and is now Sir Frederick Fipkin Fipkin of the Fip, —shire, the respected master of fox-hounds in that county. It is only to simpletons and cowards that the English laws of debtor and creditor are frightful—advance boldly towards them, and they vanish like ghosts before bold knights of old, but let a man be afraid of them, and the poor trembling wretch is their slave for ever. We all know men who have undergone the process of what is called ' whitewashing ' a half-score of times—ask them are *they* afraid of it ? Psha ! it is nothing. And wise and merciful our law is in this respect. It is the terror of what are called honest men, certainly ; but on the other hand, it is the great comfort and consolation of other persons—a philanthropic premium for those who must have their ease and cannot live without their horse to ride, nor dine without their champagne ; and who would pine away hopelessly, did not the admirable system of CREDIT supply them gratis with all the little wants and luxuries necessary to persons of their peculiar and delicate organization.

Take an instance on the other side—a friend of mine dined

the other day at the Coke-upon-Lyttelton Club and put a case to several of his legal friends there. He had been abroad with his family for two years, leaving his house in charge of a servant on board-wages. A poulterer, on his return, brings him in a bill for fine Dorking fowls, turkeys, and pigeons, and such delicacies supplied to his family during their residence five hundred miles off abroad. 'A part of this bill,' says he, 'may be correct, for it is dated, you see, three years back; and Mrs. Jones, who is at Munich, can't tell whether she paid it:—but is it not monstrous, however, that I should have to pay the *other* part? Ah, to pay for barn-door fowls that never passed my gates, and turkey-poults of which I have never seen a feather?' But the lawyers said with one voice, 'Pay it. It will cost you more to win the cause than to pay the bill.' 'And for my part,' says one great legal authority (whose name for fear of consequences I will not mention), 'if any tradesman choose to send me in a bill I will pay it rather than go to law.' How much will any honest tradesman give to know my learned friend's name. It would be a fortune to a clever fellow, and I would recommend such to take the law-list and issue little bills and little writs all round—the learned gentlemen know too well their business not to pay; and no more like to employ their own wares, than physicians like to take pills, or pastrycooks to swallow tarts. Oh, that a society of philanthropists would but take this hint and act upon it; taking upon them to swear debts against the bar, the attorneys, and the members of both houses! and so give an illustration of the noble system of credit—the kind patron of roguery, the fruitful parent of litigation, the bully who frightens solvent men into the payment of unjust debts, the tempter who encourages extravagance and knavery to contract them; of credit which offers a premium to the tradesman to cheat the customers, to the customer to cheat the tradesman, and to the lawyer to rob all. As it was heaven that commanded industry, so be sure it was the devil who invented credit.

This little digression, my dear friend, has been occasioned not so much by the sight of ¹ the execution people in charge of Mr. Walker's house, Mrs. Walker was driven to take refuge with her mamma near Sadler's Wells, and the captain remained comfortably lodged in the Fleet. He had some

¹ Omitted in later editions.

ready money, and with it managed to make his existence exceedingly comfortable. He lived with the best society of the place, consisting of several distinguished young noblemen and gentlemen. He spent the morning playing at fives and smoking cigars ; the evening smoking cigars and dining comfortably. Cards came after dinner ; and, as the captain was an experienced player, and near a score of years older than most of his friends, he was generally pretty successful ; and indeed if he had received all the money that was owed to him, he might have come out of prison and paid his creditors twenty shillings in the pound—that is, if he had been minded to do so. But there is no use in examining into that point too closely, for the fact is, young Fipkin only paid him forty pounds out of seven hundred, for which he gave him I O U's. Algernon Deuceace not only did not pay him three hundred and twenty which he lost at blind hooky, but actually borrowed seven and sixpence in money from Walker, which have never been repaid to this day ; and Lord Doublequits actually lost nineteen thousand pounds to him at heads and tails, which he never paid, pleading drunkenness and his minority. The reader may recollect a paragraph which went the round of the papers entitled, '*Affair of Honour in the Fleet Prison*.—Yesterday morning (behind the pump in the second court) Lord D-bl-qu-ts and Captain H-w-rd W-lk-r (a near relative, we understand, of His Grace the Duke of N-rf-lk) had a hostile meeting and exchanged two shots. These two young sprigs of nobility were attended to the ground by Major Flush, who, by the way, is *flush* no longer, and Captain Pam, late of the — Dragoons. Play is said to have been the cause of the quarrel, and the gallant captain is reported to have handled the noble lord's nose rather roughly at one stage of the transactions.' When Morgiana at Sadler's Wells heard these news, she was ready to faint with terror ; and rushed to the Fleet Prison, and embraced her lord and master with her usual expansion and fits of tears, very much to that gentleman's annoyance, who happened to be in company with Pam and Flush at the time, and did not care that his handsome wife should be seen too much in the dubious precincts of the Fleet. He had at least so much shame about him, and had always rejected her entreaties to be allowed to inhabit the prison with him.

'It is enough,' would he say, casting his eyes heavenward,

and with a most lugubrious countenance—‘it is enough, Morgiana, that *I* should suffer, even though your thoughtlessness has been the cause of my ruin. But enough of *that* ! I will not rebuke you for faults for which I know you are now repentant ; and I never could bear to see you in the midst of the miseries of this horrible place. Remain at home with your mother, and let me drag on the weary days here alone. If you can get me any more of that pale sherry, my love, do. I require something to cheer me in solitude, and have found my chest very much relieved by that wine. Put more pepper and eggs, my dear, into the next veal-pie you make me. I can’t eat the horrible messes in the coffee-room here.’

It was Walker’s wish, I can’t tell why, except that it is the wish of a great number of other persons in this strange world, to make his wife believe that he was wretched in mind and ill in health ; and all assertions to this effect the simple creature received with numberless tears of credulity, and would go home to Mrs. Crump, and say how her darling Howard was pining away, how he was ruined for *her*, and with what angelic sweetness he bore his captivity. The fact is, he bore it with so much resignation that no other person in the world could see that he was unhappy. His life was undisturbed by duns ; his day was his own from morning till night ; his diet was good, his acquaintances jovial, his purse tolerably well supplied, and he had not one single care to annoy him.

Mrs. Crump and Woolsey, perhaps, received Morgiana’s account of her husband’s miseries with some incredulity. The latter was now a daily visitor to Sadler’s Wells. His love for Morgiana had become a warm, fatherly, generous regard for her ; it was out of the honest fellow’s cellar that the wine used to come which did so much good to Mr. Walker’s chest ; and he tried a thousand ways to make Morgiana happy.

A very happy day, indeed, it was when, returning from her visit to the Fleet, she found in her mother’s sitting-room her dear grand rosewood piano, and every one of her music-books, which the kind-hearted tailor had purchased at the sale of Walker’s effects. And I am not ashamed to say, that Morgiana herself was so charmed, that when as usual, Mr. Woolsey came to drink tea in the evening, she actually gave him a kiss, which frightened Mr. Woolsey,

and made him blush exceedingly. She sat down, and played him that evening every one of the songs which he liked—the *old* songs—none of your Italian stuff. Podmore, the old music-master, was there too; and was delighted and astonished at the progress in singing which Morgiana had made; and when the little party separated, he took Mr. Woolsey by the hand, and said, ‘Give me leave to tell you, sir, that you’re a *trump*.’

‘That he is,’ said Canterfield, the first tragic; ‘an honour to human nature. A man whose hand is open as day to melting charity, and whose heart ever melts at the tale of woman’s distress.’

‘Pooh, pooh, stuff and nonsense, sir,’ said the tailor; but, upon my word, Mr. Canterfield’s words were perfectly correct. I wish as much could be said in favour of Woolsey’s old rival, Mr. Eglantine, who attended the sale too, but it was with a horrid kind of satisfaction at the thought that Walker was ruined. He bought the yellow satin sofa before mentioned, and transferred it to what he calls his ‘sitting-room,’ where it is to this day, bearing many marks of the best bears’-grease. Woolsey bid against Baroski for the piano, very nearly up to the actual value of the instrument, when the artist withdrew from competition; and when he was sneering at the ruin of Mr. Walker, the tailor sternly interrupted him by saying, ‘What the deuce are *you* sneering at? You did it, sir; and you’re paid every shilling of your claim, ain’t you?’ On which Baroski turned round to Miss Larkins, and said, ‘Mr. Woolsey was “a snop”’; the very words, though pronounced somewhat differently, which the gallant Cornet Fipkin had applied to him.

Well; so he *was* a snob. But, vulgar as he was, I declare, for my part, that I have a greater respect for Mr. Woolsey than for any single nobleman or gentleman mentioned in this true history.

It will be seen from the names of Messrs. Canterfield and Podmore that Morgiana was again in the midst of the widow Crump’s favourite theatrical society; and this, indeed, was the case. The widow’s little room was hung round with the pictures which were mentioned at the commencement of the story as decorating the bar of the Bootjack; and several times in a week she received her friends from the Wells, and entertained them with such humble refresh-

ments of tea and crumpets as her modest means permitted her to purchase. Among these persons Morgiana lived and sang quite as contentedly as she had ever done among the demireps of her husband's society; and, only she did not dare to own it to herself, was a great deal happier than she had been for many a day. Mrs. Captain Walker was still a great lady amongst them. Even in his ruin, Walker, the director of three companies, and the owner of the splendid pony-chaise, was to these simple persons an awful character; and when mentioned, they talked with a great deal of gravity of his being in the country, and hoped Mrs. Captain W. had good news of him. They all knew he was in the Fleet; but had he not in prison fought a duel with a viscount? Montmorency (of the Norfolk circuit) was in the Fleet too; and when Canterfield went to see poor Montey, the latter had pointed out Walker to his friend, who actually hit Lord George Tennison across the shoulders in play with a racket-bat; which event was soon made known to the whole green-room.

'They had me up one day,' said Montmorency, 'to sing a comic song, and give my recitations; and we had champagne and lobster-salad; *such* nobs!' added the player. 'Billingsgate and Vauxhall were there too, and left college at eight o'clock.'

When Morgiana was told of the circumstance by her mother, she hoped her dear Howard had enjoyed the evening, and was thankful that for once he could forget his sorrows. Nor, somehow, was she ashamed of herself for being happy afterwards, but gave way to her natural good humour without repentance or self-rebuke. I believe, indeed (alas! why are we made acquainted with the same fact regarding ourselves long after it is past and gone?)—I believe these were the happiest days of Morgiana's whole life. She had no cares except the pleasant one of attending on her husband, an easy, smiling temperament which made her regardless of to-morrow; and add to this a delightful hope relative to a certain interesting event which was about to occur, and which I shall not particularize further than by saying, that she was cautioned against too much singing by Mr. Squills, her medical attendant; and that widow Crump was busy making-up a vast number of little caps and diminutive cambric shirts, such as delighted *grand-mothers* are in the habit of fashioning. I hope this is as

genteel a way of signifying the circumstance which was about to take place in the Walker family as Miss Prim herself could desire. Mrs. Walker's mother was about to become a grandmother. There's a phrase! The *Morning Post*, which says this story is vulgar, I'm sure cannot quarrel with *that*. I don't believe the whole *Court Guide* would convey an intimation more delicately.

Well, Mrs. Crump's little grandchild was born, entirely to the dissatisfaction, I must say, of his father; who, when the infant was brought to him in the Fleet, had him abruptly covered up in his cloak again, from which he had been removed by the jealous prison door-keepers; why, do you think? Walker had a quarrel with one of them, and the wretch persisted in believing that the bundle Mrs. Crump was bringing to her son-in-law was a bundle of disguised brandy.

'The brutes!' said the lady; 'and the father's a brute too,' said she. 'He takes no more notice of me than if I was a kitchen-maid, and of Woolsey than if he was a leg of mutton—the dear, blessed little cherub!'

Mrs. Crump was a mother-in-law; let us pardon her hatred of her daughter's husband.

The Woolsey compared in the above sentence both to a leg of mutton and a cherub, was not the eminent member of the firm of Linsey, Woolsey & Co., but the little baby, who was christened Howard Woolsey Walker, with the full consent of the father, who said the tailor was a deuced good fellow, and felt really obliged to him for the sherry, for a frock-coat which he let him have in prison, and for his kindness to Morgiana. The tailor loved the little boy with all his soul; he attended his mother to her churching, and the child to the font; and, as a present to his little godson on his christening, he sent two yards of the finest white kerseymere in his shop to make him a cloak. The duke had had a pair of inexpressibles off that very piece.

House-furniture is bought and sold, music-lessons are given, children are born and christened, ladies are confined and churched—time, in other words, passes,—and yet Captain Walker still remains in prison! Does it not seem strange that he should still languish there between palisaded walls near Fleet Market, and that he should not be restored to that active and fashionable world of which he was an ornament? The fact is, the captain had been before the

court for the examination of his debts; and the commissioners, with a cruelty quite shameful towards a fallen man, had qualified his ways of getting money in most severe language, and had sent him back to prison again for the space of nine calendar months, an indefinite period, and until his accounts could be made up. This delay Walker bore like a philosopher, and, far from repining, was still the gayest fellow of the tennis-court, and the soul of the midnight carouse.

There is no use in raking up old stories, and hunting through files of dead newspapers, to know what were the specific acts which made the commissioner so angry with Captain Walker. Many a rogue has come before the court, and passed through it since then: and I would lay a wager that Howard Walker was not a bit worse than his neighbours. But as he was not a lord, and as he had no friends on coming out of prison, and had settled no money on his wife, and had, as it must be confessed, an exceedingly bad character, it is not likely that the latter would be forgiven him when once more free in the world. For instance, when Doublequits left the Fleet, he was received with open arms by his family, and had two-and-thirty horses in his stables before a week was over. Pam, of the Dragoons, came out, and instantly got a place as government courier,—a place found so good of late years (and no wonder, it is better pay than that of a colonel), that our noblemen and gentry eagerly press for it. Frank Hurricane was sent out as registrar of Tobago, or Sago, or Ticonderago; in fact, for a younger son of good family it is rather advantageous to get into debt twenty or thirty thousand pounds; you are sure of a good place afterwards in the colonies. Your friends are so anxious to get rid of you, that they will move heaven and earth to serve you. And so all the above companions of misfortune with Walker were speedily made comfortable; but *he* had no rich parents; his old father was dead in York jail. How was he to start in the world again? What friendly hand was there to fill his pocket with gold, and his cup with sparkling champagne? He was, in fact, an object of the greatest pity,—for I know of no greater than a gentleman of his habits without the means of gratifying them. He must live well, and he has not the means. Is there a more pathetic case? As for a mere low beggar—some labourless labourer, or some

weaver out of place—don't let us throw away our compassion upon *them*. Psha! they're accustomed to starve. They *can* sleep upon boards, or dine off a crust; whereas a gentleman would die in the same situation. I think this was poor Morgiana's way of reasoning.

For Walker's cash in prison beginning presently to run low, and knowing quite well that the dear fellow could not exist there without the luxuries to which he had been accustomed, she borrowed money from her mother, until the poor old lady was *à sec*. She even confessed, with tears, to Woolsey, that she was in particular want of twenty pounds, to pay a poor milliner, whose debt she could not bear to put in her husband's schedule. And I need not say she carried the money to her husband, who might have been greatly benefited by it,—only he had a bad run of luck at the cards; and how the deuce can a man help *that*?

Woolsey had repurchased for her one of the cashmere shawls. She left it behind her one day at the Fleet prison, and some rascal stole it there, having the grace, however, to send Woolsey the ticket, signifying the place where it had been pawned. Who could the scoundrel have been? Woolsey swore a great oath, and fancied he knew; but if it was Walker himself (as Woolsey fancied, and probably as was the case) who made away with the shawl, being pressed thereto by necessity, was it fair to call him a scoundrel for so doing, and should we not rather laud the delicacy of his proceeding? He was poor; who can command the cards? but he did not wish his wife should know *how* poor; he could not bear that she should suppose him arrived at the necessity of pawning a shawl.

She who had such beautiful ringlets of a sudden pleaded cold in the head, took to wearing caps. One summer evening, as she and the baby and Mrs. Crump and Woolsey (let us say all four babies together) were laughing and playing in Mrs. Crump's drawing-room—playing the most absurd gambols, fat Mrs. Crump, for instance, hiding behind the sofa, Woolsey chuck-chucking, cock-a-doodle-doing, and performing those indescribable freaks which gentlemen with philoprogenitive organs will execute in the company of children, in the midst of their play the baby gave a tug at his mother's cap; off it came—her hair was cut close to her head!

Morgiana turned as red as sealing-wax, and trembled

very much ; Mrs. Crump screamed, ' My child, where is your hair ? ' and Woolsey bursting out with a most tremendous oath against Walker that would send Miss Prim into convulsions, put his handkerchief to his face, and actually wept. ' The infernal bubble-ubble-ackguard ! ' said he, roaring and clenching his fists.

As he had passed the Bower of Bloom a few days before, he saw Mossrose, who was combing out a jet-black ringlet, and held it up as if for Woolsey's examination, with a peculiar grin. The tailor did not understand the joke, but he saw now what had happened. Morgiana had sold her hair for five guineas ; she would have sold her arm had her husband bidden her. On looking in her drawers it was found she had sold almost all her wearing apparel ; the child's clothes were all there, however. It was because her husband talked of disposing of a gilt coral that the child had, that she had parted with the locks which had formed her pride.

' I'll give you twenty guineas for that hair, you infamous fat coward,' roared the little tailor to Eglantine that evening. ' Give it up, or I'll kill you—me——'

' Mr. Mossrose ! Mr. Mossrose ! ' shouted the perfumer.

' Vell, vatsh de matter, vatsh de row ? Fight away, my boys ; two to one on the tailor,' said Mr. Mossrose, much enjoying the sport (for Woolsey, striding through the shop without speaking to him, had rushed into the studio, where he plumped upon Eglantine).

' Tell him about that hair, sir.'

' That hair ! Now keep yourself quiet, Mister Timble, and don't tink for to bully *me*. You mean Mrs. Valke's 'air ? Vy, she sold it me.'

' And the more blackguard you for buying it ? Will you take twenty guineas for it ? '

' No,' said Mossrose.

' Twenty-five ? '

' Can't,' said Mossrose.

' Hang it ; will you take forty ? There.'

' I vish I'd kep it,' said the Hebrew gentleman, with unfeigned regret. ' Eglantine dressed it this very night.'

' For Countess Baldenstiern, the Swedish Hambassador's lady,' says Eglantine (his Hebrew partner was by no means a favourite with the ladies, and only superintended the accounts of the concern). ' It's this very night at

Devonshire 'Ouse, with four hostrich plumes, lappets, and trimmings. And now, Mr. Woolsey, I'll trouble you to apologize.'

Mr. Woolsey did not answer, but walked up to Mr. Eglantine and snapped his fingers so close under the perfumer's nose that the latter started back and seized the bell-rope. Mossrose burst out laughing, and the tailor walked majestically from the shop, with both hands stuck between the lappets of his coat.

'My dear,' said he to Morgiana a short time afterwards, 'you must not encourage that husband of yours in his extravagance, and sell the clothes off your poor back, that he may feast and act the fine gentleman in prison.'

'It is his health, poor dear soul!' interposed Mrs. Walker, 'his chest. Every farthing of the money goes to the doctors, poor fellow!'

'Well, now listen: I am a rich man;' (it was a great fib, for Woolsey's income, as a junior partner of the firm, was but a small one) 'I can very well afford to make him an allowance while he is in the Fleet, and have written to him to say so. But if you ever give him a penny, or sell a trinket belonging to you, upon my word and honour I will withdraw the allowance, and, though it would go to my heart, I'll never see you again. You wouldn't make me unhappy, would you?'

'I'd go on my knees to serve you, and Heaven bless you,' said the wife.

'Well, then, you must give me this promise.' And she did. 'And now,' said he, 'your mother, and Podmore, and I, have been talking over matters, and we've agreed that you may make a very good income for yourself, though, to be sure, I wish it could have been managed any other way; but needs must, you know. You're the finest singer in the universe.'

'La!' said Morgiana, highly delighted.

'I never heard anything like you, though I'm no judge. Podmore says he is sure you will do very well, and has no doubt you might get very good engagements at concerts or on the stage; and as that husband will never do any good, and you have a child to support, sing you must.'

'Oh! how glad I should be to pay his debts and repay all he has done for me,' cried Mrs. Walker. 'Think of his giving two hundred guineas to Mr. Baroski to have me

taught. Was not that kind of him ? Do you *really* think I should succeed ?'

'There's Miss Larkins has succeeded.'

'The little, high-shouldered, vulgar thing !' says Morgiana. 'I'm sure I ought to succeed if *she* did.'

'She sing against Morgiana ?' said Mrs. Crump. 'I'd like to see her, indeed ! She ain't fit to snuff a candle to her.'

'I dare say not,' said the tailor, 'though I don't understand the thing myself ; but if Morgiana can make a fortune, why shouldn't she ?'

'Heaven knows we want it, Woolsey,' cried Mrs. Crump. 'And to see her on the stage was always the wish of my heart ;' and so it had formerly been the wish of Morgiana, and now, with the hope of helping her husband and child, the wish became a duty, and she fell to practising once more from morning till night.

One of the most generous of men and tailors who ever lived now promised, if further instruction should be considered necessary (though that he could hardly believe possible), that he would lend Morgiana any sum required for the payment of lessons ; and accordingly she once more betook herself, under Podmore's advice, to the singing school. Baroski's academy was, after the passages between them, out of the question, and she placed herself under the instruction of the excellent English composer Sir George Thrum, whose large and awful wife, Lady Thrum, dragon of virtue and propriety, kept watch over the master and the pupils, and was the sternest guardian of female virtue on or off any stage.

Morgiana came at a propitious moment. Baroski had launched Miss Larkins under the name of Ligonier. The Ligonier was enjoying considerable success, and was singing classical music to tolerable audiences, whereas Miss Butts, Sir George's last pupil, had turned out a complete failure, and the rival house was only able to make a faint opposition to the new star with Miss M'Whirter, who, though an old favourite, had lost her upper notes and her front teeth, and, the fact was, drew no longer.

Directly Sir George heard Mrs. Walker he tapped Podmore, who accompanied her, on the waistcoat, and said, 'Poddy, thank you ; we'll cut the orange-boy's throat with that voice.' It was by the familiar title of orange-boy that the great Baroski was known among his opponents.

'We'll crush him, Podmore,' said Lady Thrum, in her deep hollow voice. 'You may stop and dine.' And Podmore stayed to dinner, and ate cold mutton, and drank marsala with the greatest reverence for the great English composer. The very next day Lady Thrum hired a pair of horses, and paid a visit to Mrs. Crump and her daughter at Sadler's Wells.

All these things were kept profoundly secret from Walker, who received very magnanimously the allowance of two guineas a-week which Woolsey made him, and with the aid of the few shillings his wife could bring him, managed to exist as best he might. He did not dislike gin when he could get no claret, and the former liquor, under the name of 'tape' used to be measured out pretty liberally in what was formerly her Majesty's prison of the Fleet.

Morgiana pursued her studies under Thrum, and we shall hear in the next chapter how it was she changed her name to RAVENSWING.

CHAPTER VII

IN WHICH MORGIANA ADVANCES TOWARDS FAME AND
HONOUR, AND IN WHICH SEVERAL GREAT LITERARY
CHARACTERS MAKE THEIR APPEARANCE

'We must begin, my dear madam,' said Sir George Thrum, 'by unlearning all that Mr. Baroski (of whom I do not wish to speak with the slightest disrespect) has taught you!'

Morgiana knew that every professor says as much, and submitted to undergo the study requisite for Sir George's system with perfect good grace. *Au fond*, as I was given to understand, the methods of the two artists were pretty similar; but as there was rivalry between them, and continual desertion of scholars from one school to another, it was fair for each to take all the credit he could get in the success of any pupil. If a pupil failed, for instance, Thrum would say Baroski had spoiled her irretrievably; while the German would regret 'dat dat yong voman, who had a good organ, should have trown away her dime wid dat old Drum.' When one of these deserters succeeded, 'Yes, yes,' would either professor cry, 'I formed her; she owes

her fortune to me.' Both of them thus, in future days, claimed the education of the famous Ravenswing; and even Sir George Thrum, though he wished to *écraser* the Ligonier, pretended that her present success was his work, because once she had been brought by her mother, Mrs. Larkins, to sing for Sir George's approval.

When the two professors met it was with the most delighted cordiality on the part of both. '*Mein lieber Herr*,' Thrum would say (with some malice), 'your sonata in X flat is divine.' 'Chevalier,' Baroski would reply, 'Dat andante movement in W is worthy of Beethoven, I gif you my sacred honour,' and so forth. In fact, they loved each other, as gentlemen in their profession always do.

The two famous professors conduct their academies on very opposite principles. Baroski writes ballet music; Thrum, on the contrary, says 'he cannot but deplore the dangerous fascinations of the dance,' and writes more for Exeter Hall and Birmingham. While Baroski drives a cab in the park with a very suspicious Mademoiselle Léocadie, or Aménaïde, by his side, you may see Thrum walking to evening church with his lady, and hymns are sung there of his own composition. He belongs to the Athenaeum Club, he goes to the levee once a-year, he does everything that a respectable man should, and if, by the means of this respectability, he manages to make his little trade far more profitable than it otherwise would be, are we to quarrel with him for it?

Sir George, in fact, had every reason to be respectable. He had been a choir-boy at Windsor, had played to the old king's violoncello, had been intimate with him, and had received knighthood at the hand of his revered sovereign. He had a snuff-box which his majesty gave him, and portraits of him and the young princes all over the house. He had also a foreign order (no other, indeed, than the Elephant and Castle of Kalbsbraten-Pumpnickel) conferred upon him by the Grand Duke when here with the allied sovereigns in 1814. With this riband round his neck, on gala days, and in a white waistcoat, the old gentleman looked splendid as he moved along in a Windsor button, and neat black small-clothes, and silk stockings. He lived in an old, tall, dingy house, furnished in the reign of George III, his beloved master, and not much more cheerful now than a family vault. They are awfully funereal those ornaments of the

close of the last century,—tall, gloomy, horsehair chairs, mouldy Turkey carpets, with wretched druggets to guard them, little cracked sticking-plaster miniatures of people in *tours* and pigtails over high-shouldered mantelpieces, two dismal urns on each side of a lanky sideboard, and in the midst a queer twisted receptacle for worn-out knives with green handles. Under the sideboard stands a cellaret that looks as if it held half a bottle of currant wine, and a shivering plate-warmer that never could get any comfort out of the wretched old cramped grate yonder. Don't you know in such houses the gray gloom that hangs over the stairs, the dull-coloured old carpet that winds its way up the same, growing thinner, duller, and more threadbare, as it mounts to the bedroom floors? There is something awful in the bedroom of a respectable old couple of sixty-five. Think of the old feathers, turbans, bugles, petticoats, pomatum-pots, spencers, white satin shoes, false fronts, the old flaccid, boneless stays tied up in faded riband, the dusky fans, the old forty-years-old baby-linen, the letters of Sir George when he was young, poor Maria's doll, who died in 1803, Frederick's first corduroy breeches, and the newspaper which contains the account of his distinguishing himself at the siege of Seringapatam. All these lie somewhere damp and squeezed down into glum old presses and wardrobes. At that glass the wife has sat many times these fifty years; in that old morocco bed her children were born. Where are they now? Fred, the brave captain, and Charles, the saucy collegier; there hangs a drawing of him done by Mr. Beechey, and that sketch by Cosway was the very likeness of Louisa before . . .

'Mr. Fitz-Boodle! for Heaven's sake come down. What are you doing in a lady's bedroom?'

'The fact is, madam, I had no business there in life, but, having had quite enough wine with Sir George, my thoughts had wandered upstairs into the sanctuary of female excellence, where your ladyship nightly reposes. You do not sleep so well now as in old days, though there is no patter of little steps to wake you overhead.'

They call that room the nursery still, and the little wicket still hangs at the upper stairs: it has been there for forty years—*bon Dieu!* Can't you see the ghosts of little faces peering over it? I wonder whether they get up in the night as the moonlight shines into the blank, vacant

old room, and play there solemnly with little ghostly horses, and the spirits of dolls, and tops that turn and turn, but don't hum.

Once more, sir, come down to the lower story—that is, to the Morgiana story—with which the above sentences have no more to do than this morning's leading article in the *Times*; only it was at this house of Sir George Thrum's that I met Morgiana. Sir George, in old days, had instructed some of the female members of our family, and I recollect cutting my fingers as a child with one of those attenuated green-handled knives in the queer box yonder.

In those days Sir George Thrum was the first great musical teacher of London, and the royal patronage brought him a great number of fashionable pupils, of whom Lady Fitz-Boodle was one. It was a long, long time ago; in fact, Sir George Thrum was old enough to remember persons who had been present at Mr. Braham's first appearance, and the old gentleman's days of triumph had been those of Billington and Incedon, Catalani and Madame Storaçe.

He was the author of several operas (*The Camel Driver*, *Britons Alarmed*; or, *The Siege of Bergen-op-Zoom*, &c. &c.), and, of course, of songs which had considerable success in their day, but are forgotten now, and are as much faded and out of fashion as those old carpets which we have described in the professor's house, and which were, doubtless, very brilliant once. But such is the fate of carpets, of flowers, of music, of men, and of the most admirable novels—even this story will not be alive for many centuries. Well, well, why struggle against Fate?

But, though his hey-day of fashion was gone, Sir George still held his place among the musicians of the old school, conducted occasionally at the Ancient Concerts and the Philharmonic, and his glees are still favourites after public dinners, and are sung by those old bacchanalians, in chestnut wigs, who attend for the purposes of amusing the guests on such occasions of festivity. The great old people at the gloomy old concerts before mentioned always pay Sir George marked respect; and, indeed, from the old gentleman's peculiar behaviour to his superiors it is impossible they should not be delighted with him, so he leads at almost every one of the concerts in the old-fashioned houses in town.

Becomingly obsequious to his superiors, he is with the rest of the world properly majestic, and has obtained no small

success by his admirable and undeviating respectability. Respectability has been his great card through life ; ladies can trust their daughters at Sir George Thrum's academy. ' A good musician, madam,' says he to the mother of a new pupil, ' should not only have a fine ear, a good voice, and an indomitable industry, but, above all, a faultless character—faultless, that is, as far as our poor nature will permit. And you will remark that those young persons with whom your lovely daughter, Miss Smith, will pursue her musical studies, are all, in a moral point of view, as spotless as that charming young lady. How should it be otherwise ? I have been myself the father of a family ; I have been honoured with the intimacy of the wisest and best of kings, my late sovereign George III, and I can proudly show an example of decorum to my pupils in my Sophia. Mrs. Smith, I have the honour of introducing to you my Lady Thrum.'

The old lady would rise at this, and make a gigantic courtesy, such a one as had begun the minuet at Ranelagh fifty years ago, and, the introduction ended, Mrs. Smith would retire, after having seen the portraits of the princes, his late majesty's snuff-box, and a piece of music which he used to play, noted by himself—Mrs. Smith, I say, would drive back to Baker Street delighted to think that her Frederica had secured so eligible and respectable a master. I forgot to say that, during the interview between Mrs. Smith and Sir George, the latter would be called out of his study by his black servant, and my Lady Thrum would take that opportunity of mentioning when he was knighted, and how he got his foreign order, and deploring the sad condition of *other* musical professors, and the dreadful immorality which sometimes arose in consequence of their laxness. Sir George was a good deal engaged to dinners in the season, and if invited to dine with a nobleman, as he might possibly be on the day when Mrs. Smith requested the honour of his company, he would write back ' that he should have had the sincerest happiness in waiting upon Mrs. Smith in Baker Street, if, previously, my Lord Tweedledale had not been so kind as to engage him.' This letter, of course, shown by Mrs. Smith to her friends, was received by them with proper respect ; and thus, in spite of age and new fashions, Sir George still reigned pre-eminent for a mile round Cavendish Square. By the young pupils of the academy

he was called Sir Charles Grandison, and, indeed, fully deserved this title on account of the indomitable respectability of his whole actions.

It was under this gentleman that Morgiana made her *début* in public life. •I do not know what arrangements may have been made between Sir George Thrum and his pupil regarding the profits which were to accrue to the former from engagements procured by him for the latter; but there was, no doubt, an understanding between them. For Sir George, respectable as he was, had the reputation of being extremely clever at a bargain; and Lady Thrum herself, in her great high-tragedy way, could purchase a pair of soles or select a leg of mutton with the best housekeeper in London.

When, however, Morgiana had been for some six months under his tuition, he began for some reason or other to be exceedingly hospitable, and invited his friends to numerous entertainments, at one of which, as I have said, I had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Walker.

Although the worthy musician's dinners were not good, the old knight had some excellent wine in his cellar, and his arrangement of his party deserves to be commended.

For instance, he meets me and Bob Fitz-Urse in Pall Mall, at whose paternal house he was also a visitor. 'My dear young gentlemen,' says he, 'will you come and dine with a poor musical composer? I have some Comet-hock, and, what is more curious to you perhaps, as men of wit, one or two of the great literary characters of London whom you would like to see—quite curiosities, my dear young friends.' And we agreed to go.

To the literary men he says, 'I have a little quiet party at home, Lord Roundtowers, the Honourable Mr. Fitz-Urse of the Life Guards, and a few more. Can you tear yourself away from the war of wits, and take a quiet dinner with a few mere men about town?'

The literary men instantly purchase new satin stocks and white gloves, and are delighted to fancy themselves members of the world of fashion. Instead of inviting twelve Royal Academicians, or a dozen authors, or a dozen men of science to dinner, as his Grace the Duke of —, and the Right Honourable Sir Robert —, are in the habit of doing once a year, this plan of fusion is the one they should adopt. Not invite all artists, as they would invite all farmers

to a rent-dinner; but they should have a proper commingling of artists and men of the world. There is one of the latter whose name is George Savage Fitz-Boodle, who—— But let us return to Sir George Thrum.

Fitz-Urse and I arrive at the dismal old house, and are conducted up the staircase by a black servant, who shouts out, 'Missa Fiss-Boodle—the *Honourable* Missa Fiss-Urse!' It was evident that Lady Thrum had instructed the swarthy groom of the chambers (for there is nothing particularly honourable in my friend Fitz's face that I know of, unless an abominable squint may be said to be so). Lady Thrum, whose figure is something like that of the shot-tower opposite Waterloo Bridge, makes a majestic inclination and a speech to signify her pleasure at receiving under her roof two of the children of Sir George's best pupils. A lady in black velvet is seated by the old fireplace, with whom a stout gentleman in an exceedingly light coat and ornamental waistcoat is talking very busily. 'The great star of the night,' whispers our host. 'Mrs. Walker, gentlemen—the *Ravenswing*! She is talking to the famous Mr. Slang, of the —— Theatre.'

'Is she a fine singer?' says Fitz-Urse. 'She's a very fine woman.'

'My dear young friends, you shall hear to-night! I, who have heard every fine voice in Europe, confidently pledged my respectability that the Ravenswing is equal to them all. She has the graces, sir, of a Venus with the mind of a Muse. She is a siren, sir, without the dangerous qualities of one. She is hallowed, sir, by her misfortunes as by her genius; and I am proud to think that my instructions have been the means of developing the wondrous qualities that were latent within her until now.'

'You don't say so!' says gobemouche Fitz-Urse.

Having thus indoctrinated Mr. Fitz-Urse, Sir George takes another of his guests, and proceeds to work upon him. 'My dear Mr. Bludyer, how do you do? Mr. Fitz-Boodle, Mr. Bludyer, the brilliant and accomplished wit, whose sallies in the *Tomahawk* delight us every Saturday. Nay, no blushes, my dear sir; you are very wicked, but oh! so pleasant. Well, Mr. Bludyer, I am glad to see you, sir, and hope you will have a favourable opinion of our genius, sir. As I was saying to Mr. Fitz-Boodle, she has the graces of a Venus with the mind of a Muse. She is a siren, without

the dangerous qualities of one,' &c. This little speech was made to half a dozen persons in the course of the evening—persons, for the most part, connected with the public journals or the theatrical world. There was Mr. Squinny, the editor of the *Flowers of Fashion*, Mr. Desmond Mulligan, the poet, and reporter for a morning paper; and other worthies of their calling. For though Sir George is a respectable man, and as high-minded and moral an old gentleman as ever wore knee-buckles, he does not neglect the little arts of popularity, and can condescend to receive very queer company if need be.

For instance, at the dinner-party at which I had the honour of assisting, and at which on the right hand of Lady Thrum sat the *obligé* nobleman, whom the Thrums were a great deal too wise to omit (the sight of a lord does good to us commoners, or why else should we be so anxious to have one?). In the second place of honour, and on her ladyship's left hand, sat Mr. Slang, the manager of one of the theatres, a gentleman whom my Lady Thrum would scarcely, but for a great necessity's sake, have been induced to invite to her table. He had the honour of leading Mrs. Walker to dinner, who looked splendid in black velvet and turban, full of health and smiles.

Lord Roundtowers is an old gentleman who has been at the theatres five times a week for these fifty years, a living dictionary of the stage, recollecting every actor and actress who has appeared upon it for half a century. He perfectly well remembered Miss Delancy in Morgiana; he knew what had become of Ali Baba, and how Cassim had left the stage, and was now the keeper of a public-house. All this store of knowledge he kept quietly to himself, or only delivered in confidence to his next neighbour in the intervals of the banquet, which he enjoys prodigiously. He lives at an hotel: if not invited to dine, eats a mutton-chop very humbly at his club, and finishes his evening after the play at Crockford's, whither he goes not for the sake of the play but of the supper there. He is described in the *Court Guide* as of Simmer's Hotel, and of Roundtowers, County Cork. It is said that the round towers really exist. But he has not been in Ireland since the rebellion; and his property is so hampered with ancestral mortgages, and rent-charges, and annuities, that his income is barely sufficient to provide the modest mutton-

chop before alluded to. He has, any time these fifty years, lived in the wickedest company in London, and is, withal, as harmless, mild, good-natured, innocent an old gentleman as can readily be seen.

'Roundy,' shouts the elegant Mr. Slang, across the table, with a voice which makes Lady Thrum shudder, 'Tuff, a glass of wine.'

My lord replies meekly, 'Mr. Slang, I shall have very much pleasure. What shall it be?'

'There is madeira near you, my lord,' says my lady, pointing to a tall thin decanter of the fashion of the year.

'Madeira! Marsala, by Jove, your ladyship means?' shouts Mr. Slang. 'No, no, old birds are not caught with chaff. Thrum, old boy, let's have some of your Comet-hock.'

'My Lady Thrum, I believe that *is* marsala,' says the knight, blushing a little, in reply to a question from his Sophia. 'Ajax, the hock to Mr. Slang.'

'I'm in that,' yells Bludyer from the end of the table. 'My lord, I'll join you.'

'Mr. —, I beg your pardon—I shall be very happy to take wine with you, sir.'

'It is Mr. Bludyer, the celebrated newspaper writer,' whispers Lady Thrum.

'Bludyer, Bludyer? A very clever man, I dare say. He has a very loud voice, and reminds me of Brett. Does your ladyship remember Brett, who played the *Fathers* at the Haymarket in 1802?'

'What an old stupid Roundtowers is!' says Slang, archly, nudging Mrs. Walker in the side. 'How's Walker, eh?'

'My husband is in the country,' replied Mrs. Walker, hesitatingly.

'Gammon! I know where he is! Law bless you!—don't blush. I've been there myself a dozen times. We were talking about quod, Lady Thrum. Were you ever in college?'

'I was at the Commemoration at Oxford in 1814, when the sovereigns were there, and at Cambridge when Sir George received his degree of Doctor of Music.'

'Laud, laud, *that's* not, the college *we* mean.'

'There is ~~also~~ the college in Gower Street, where my grandson—'

'This is the college in *Queer Street*, ma'am, haw, haw! Mulligan, you divvle,' (in an Irish accent) 'a glass of wine

with you. Wine, here, you waiter! What's your name, you black nigger? 'Possom up a gum-tree, eh? Fill him up. Dere he go' (imitating the Mandingo manner of speaking English).

In this agreeable way would Mr. Slang rattle on, speedily making himself the centre of the conversation, and addressing graceful familiarities to all the gentlemen and ladies round him. [And if his stories during dinner are such as to make ladies present look extremely awkward, he has a collection of tales with which he instantly commences, and which surpass all *historiettes* ever heard.]¹

It was good to see how the little knight, the most moral and calm of men, was compelled to receive Mr. Slang's stories, and the frightened air with which at the conclusion of one of them, he would venture upon a commendatory grin. His lady, on her part too, had been laboriously civil; and, on the occasion on which I had the honour of meeting this gentleman and Mrs. Walker, it was the latter who gave the signal for the withdrawing to the lady of the house, by saying, 'I think, Lady Thrum, it is quite time for us to retire.' Some exquisite joke of Mr. Slang's was the cause of this abrupt disappearance.

['Don't go, Mrs. Walker,' says he, laying hold of her scarf; 'don't be off yet. It's only my fun.' But Morgiana left the room indignantly; and,]¹ as they went upstairs to the drawing-room, Lady Thrum took occasion to say, 'My dear, in the course of your profession you will have to submit to many such familiarities on the part of persons of low breeding, such as I fear Mr. Slang is. But let me caution you against giving way to your temper as you did. Did you not perceive that I never allowed him to see my inward dissatisfaction? And I make it a particular point that you should be very civil to him to-night. Your interests—our interests—depend upon it.'

'And are my interests to make me civil to a wretch like that?'

'Mrs. Walker, would you wish to give lessons in morality and behaviour to Lady Thrum?' said the old lady, drawing herself up with great dignity. It was evident that she had a very strong desire indeed to conciliate Mr. Slang; and hence I have no doubt that Sir George was to have a considerable share of Morgiana's earnings.

¹ Omitted in later editions.

Mr. Bludyer, the famous editor of the *Tomahawk*, whose jokes Sir George pretended to admire so much (Sir George who never made a joke in his life), was a press bravo of considerable talent and no principle, and who, to use his own words, would 'back himself for a slashing article against any man in England!' He would not only write, but fight on a pinch, was a good scholar, and as savage in his manner as with his pen. Mr. Squinny is of exactly the opposite school, as delicate as milk-and-water, harmless in his habits, fond of the flute when the state of his chest would allow him, a great practiser of waltzing and dancing in general, and in his journal mildly malicious. He never goes beyond the bounds of politeness, but manages to insinuate a great deal that is disagreeable to an author in the course of twenty lines of criticism. Personally he is quite respectable, and lives with two maiden aunts at Brompton. Nobody, on the contrary, knows where Mr. Bludyer lives. He has houses of call, mysterious taverns where he may be found at particular hours by those who need him, and where panting publishers are in the habit of hunting him up. For a bottle of wine and a guinea he will write a page of praise or abuse of any man living, or on any subject or on any line of politics. 'Hang it, sir,' says he, 'pay me enough and I will write down my own father!' According to the state of his credit he is dressed either almost in rags, or else in the extremest flush of fashion.

With the latter attire he puts on a haughty and aristocratic air, and would slap a duke on the shoulder. If there is one thing more dangerous than to refuse to lend him a sum of money when he asks for it, it is to lend it to him, for he never pays, and never pardons a man to whom he owes. 'Walker refused to cash a bill for me,' he had been heard to say, 'and I'll do for his wife when she comes out on the stage!' Mrs. Walker and Sir George Thrum were in an agony about the *Tomahawk*, hence the latter's invitation to Mr. Bludyer. Sir George was in a great tremor about the *Flowers of Fashion*, hence his invitation to Mr. Squinny. Mr. Squinny was introduced to Lord Roundtowers and Mr. Fitz-Urse as one of the most delightful and talented of our young men of genius; and Fitz, who believes everything any one tells him, was quite pleased to have the honour of sitting near the live editor of a paper. I have reason to think that Mr. Squinny himself was no less

delighted. I saw him giving his card to Fitz-Urse at the end of the second course.

No particular attention was paid to Mr. Desmond Mulligan. Political enthusiasm is his *forte*. He lives and writes in a rapture. He is, of course, a member of an inn of court, and greatly addicted to after-dinner speaking as a preparation for the bar, where as a young man of genius he hopes one day to shine. He is almost the only man to whom Bludyer is civil, for, if the latter will fight doggedly when there is a necessity for so doing, the former fights like an Irishman, and has a pleasure in it. He has been 'on the ground' I don't know how many times, and quitted his country on account of a quarrel with government regarding certain articles published by him in the *Phoenix* newspaper. With the third bottle, he becomes overpoweringly great on the wrongs of Ireland, and at that period generally volunteers a couple or more of Irish melodies, selecting the most melancholy in the collection. At five in the afternoon, you are sure to see him about the House of Commons, and he knows the Reform Club (he calls it the Refawrum) as well as if he were a member. It is curious for the contemplative mind to mark those mysterious hangers-on of Irish Members of Parliament—strange runners and aides de camp which all the honourable gentlemen appear to possess. Desmond, in his political capacity, is one of these, and besides his calling as reporter to a newspaper, is 'our well-informed correspondent' of that famous Munster paper, the *Green Flag of Skibbercen*.

With Mr. Mulligan's qualities and history I only became subsequently acquainted. On the present evening he made but a brief stay at the dinner-table, being compelled by his professional duties to attend the House of Commons.

The above formed the party with whom I had the honour to dine. What other repasts Sir George Thrum may have given, what assemblies of men of mere science he may have invited to give their opinion regarding his prodigy, what other editors of papers he may have pacified or rendered favourable, who knows? On the present occasion, we did not quit the dinner-table until Mr. Slang the manager was considerably excited by wine, and music had been heard for some time in the drawing-room overhead during our absence. An addition had been made to the Thrum party by the arrival of several persons to spend the evening,

—a man to play on the violin between the singing, a youth to play on the piano, Miss Horsman to sing with Mrs. Walker, and other scientific characters. In a corner sat a red-faced old lady, of whom the mistress of the mansion took little notice; and a gentleman with a royal button, who blushed and looked exceedingly modest.

‘Hang me!’ says Mr. Bludyer, who had perfectly good reasons for recognizing Mr. Woolsey, and who on this day chose to assume his aristocratic air, ‘there’s a tailor in the room! What do they mean by asking *me* to meet tradesmen?’

‘Delancy, my dear,’ cries Slang, entering the room with a reel, ‘how’s your precious health? Give us your hand! When *are* we to be married? Make room for me on the sofa, that’s a duck!’

‘Get along, Slang,’ says Mrs. Crump, addressed by the manager by her maiden name (artists generally drop the title of honour which people adopt in the world, and call each other by their simple surnames)—‘get along, Slang, or I’ll tell Mrs. S.!’ The enterprising manager replies by sportively striking Mrs. Crump on the side a blow which causes a great giggle from the lady insulted, and a most good-humoured threat to box Slang’s ears. I fear very much that Morgiana’s mother thought Mr. Slang an exceedingly gentlemanlike and agreeable person; besides, she was eager to have his good opinion of Mrs. Walker’s singing.

The manager stretched himself out with much gracefulness on the sofa, supporting two little dumpy legs encased in varnished boots on a chair.

‘Ajax, some tea to Mr. Slang,’ said my lady, looking towards that gentleman with a countenance expressive of some alarm, I thought.

[‘No; hang it! my lady,’ roared he, ‘no tea for me! I’ll tell you what though, Ajax, my boy, bring me some brandy and cold water, and set it here on the little table close by me.’

‘Get everything, Ajax, to make Mr. Slang comfortable,’ said our hostess, looking more and more enraged; and poor Sir George, who had been locking up the wine in the dismal cellar¹ below stairs, was obliged to disappear again in order to fetch a bottle of brandy for the manager.]¹

¹ Omitted in later editions.

'That's right, Ajax, my black prince!' exclaimed Slang, when the negro brought the required refreshment; 'and now I suppose you'll be wanted in the orchestra yonder. Don't Ajax play the cymbals, Sir George?'

'Ha, ha ha! very good—capital!' answered the knight, exceedingly frightened; 'but ours is not a *military* band. Miss Horsman, Mr. Craw, my dear Mrs. Ravenswing, shall we begin the trio? Silence, gentlemen, if you please, it is a little piece from my opera of the *Brigand's Bride*. Miss Horsman takes the Page's part, Mr. Craw is Stiletto the Brigand, my accomplished pupil is the Bride,' and the music began.

The Bride.

My heart with joy is beating,
My eyes with tears are dim;

The Page.

Her heart with joy is beating,
Her eyes are fixed on him;

The Brigand.

My heart with rage is beating,
In blood my eyeballs swim!

What may have been the merits of the music or the singing, I, of course, cannot guess. Lady Thrum sat opposite the teacups, nodding her head and beating time very gravely. Lord Roundtowers, by her side, nodded his head too, for awhile, and then fell asleep. I should have done the same but for the manager, whose actions were worthy of remark. He sang with all the three singers, and a great deal louder than any of them; he shouted bravo! or hissed as he thought proper; he criticized all the points of Mrs. Walker's person. 'She'll do, Crump, she'll do—a splendid arm—you'll see her eyes in the shilling gallery! What sort of a foot has she? She's five feet three, if she's an inch! Bravo—slap up—capital—hurra!' and he concluded by saying, with the aid of the Ravenswing, he would put Ligonier's nose out of joint!

The enthusiasm of Mr. Slang almost reconciled Lady Thrum to the abruptness of his manners, and even caused Sir George to forget that his chorus had been interrupted by the obstreperous familiarity of the manager.

'And what do *you* think. Mr. Bludyer,' said the tailor,

delighted that his *protégée* should be thus winning all hearts, 'isn't Mrs. Walker a tip-top singer, eh, sir?'

'I think she's a very bad one, Mr. Woolsey!' said the illustrious author, wishing to abbreviate all communications with a tailor to whom he owed forty pounds.

'Then, sir,' says Mr. Woolsey, fiercely, 'I'll—I'll thank you to pay me my little bill!'

It is true there was no connexion between Mrs. Walker's singing and Woolsey's little bill; that the '*Then, sir,*' was perfectly illogical on Woolsey's part, but it was a very happy hit for the future fortunes of Mrs. Walker. Who knows what would have come of her *début* but for that '*Then, sir,*' and whether a 'smashing article' from the *Tomahawk* might not have ruined her for ever?

'Are you a relation of Mrs. Walker's,' said Mr. Bludyer, in reply to the angry tailor.

'What's that to you, whether I am or not?' replied Woolsey, fiercely. 'But I'm the friend of Mrs. Walker, sir; proud am I to say so, sir; and, as the poet says, sir, "a little learning's a dangerous thing," sir; and I think a man who don't pay his bills may keep his tongue quiet at least, sir, and not abuse a lady, sir, whom everybody else praises, sir. You shan't humbug *me* any more, sir; you shall hear from my attorney to-morrow, so mark that!'

'Hush, my dear Mr. Woolsey,' cried the literary man, 'don't make a noise; come into this window; is Mrs. Walker *really* a friend of yours?'

'I've told you so, sir.'

'Well, in that case, I shall do my utmost to serve her; and, look you, Woolsey, any article you choose to send about her to the *Tomahawk* I promise you I'll put in.'

'*Will* you, though? then we'll say nothing about the little bill.'

'You may do on that point,' answered Bludyer, haughtily, 'exactly as you please. I am not to be frightened from my duty, mind that; and mind, too, that I can write a slashing article better than any man in England: I could crush her by ten lines.'

The tables were now turned, and it was Woolsey's turn to be alarmed.

'Pooh! pooh! I *was* angry,' said he, 'because you abused Mrs. Walker, who's an angel on earth; but I'm

very willing to apologize. I say—come—let me take your measure for some new clothes, eh ! Mr. B. ?’

‘I’ll come to your shop,’ answered the literary man, quite appeased. ‘Silence ! they’re beginning another song.’

The songs, which I don’t attempt to describe (and, upon my word and honour, as far as *I* can understand matters, I believe, to this day, that Mrs. Walker was only an ordinary singer), the songs lasted a great deal longer than I liked, but I was nailed, as it were, to the spot, having agreed to sup at Knightsbridge barracks with Fitz-Urse, whose carriage was ordered at eleven o’clock.

‘My dear Mr. Fitz-Boodle,’ said our old host to me, ‘you can do me the greatest service in the world.’

‘Speak, sir !’ said I.

‘Will you ask your honourable and gallant friend, the captain, to drive home Mr. Squinny to Brompton ?’

‘Can’t Mr. Squinny get a cab ?’ Sir George looked particularly arch.

‘Generalship, my dear young friend,—a little harmless generalship. Mr. Squinny will not give much for *my* opinion of my pupil, but he will value very highly the opinion of the Honourable Mr. Fitz-Urse.’

For a moral man, was not the little knight a clever fellow ? He had bought Mr. Squinny for a dinner worth ten shillings, and for a ride in a carriage with a lord’s son. Squinny was carried to Brompton, and set down at his aunt’s door, delighted with his new friends, and exceedingly sick with a cigar they had made him smoke.

CHAPTER VIII

IN WHICH MR. WALKER SHOWS GREAT PRUDENCE AND FORBEARANCE

THE describing of all these persons does not advance Morgiana’s story much. But, perhaps, some country readers are not acquainted with the class of persons by whose printed opinions they are guided, and are simple enough to imagine that mere merit will make a reputation on the stage or elsewhere. The making of a theatrical success is a much more complicated and curious thing than such persons fancy it to be. Immense are the pains

taken to get a good word from Mr. This of the *Star*, or Mr. That of the *Courier*, to propitiate the favour of the critic of the day, and get the editors of the metropolis into a good humour,—above all, to have the name of the person to be puffed perpetually before the public. Artists cannot be advertised like Macassar oil or blacking, and they want it to the full as much; hence endless ingenuity must be practised in order to keep the popular attention awake. Suppose a great actor moves from London to Windsor, the *Brentford Champion* must state that ‘Yesterday Mr. Blazes and suite passed rapidly through our city; the celebrated comedian is engaged, we hear, at Windsor, to give some of his inimitable readings of our great national bard to the *most illustrious audience* in the realm.’ This piece of intelligence the *Hammersmith Observer* will question the next week, as thus:—‘A contemporary, the *Brentford Champion*, says that Blazes is engaged to give Shakespearean readings, at Windsor, to “the most illustrious audience in the realm.” We question this fact very much. We would, indeed, that it were true; but the *most illustrious audience* in the realm prefers *foreign* melodies to the *native wood-notes wild* of the sweet song-bird of Avon. Mr. Blazes is simply gone to Eton, where his son, Master Massinger Blazes, is suffering, we regret to hear, under a severe attack of the chicken-pox. This complaint (incident to youth) has raged, we understand, with frightful virulence in Eton School.’

And if, after the above paragraphs, some London paper chooses to attack the folly of the provincial press, which talks of Mr. Blazes, and chronicles his movements, as if he were a crowned head, what harm is done? Blazes can write in his own name to the London journal, and say that it is not *his* fault if provincial journals choose to chronicle his movements, and that he was far from wishing that the afflictions of those who are dear to him should form the subject of public comment, and be held up to public ridicule. ‘We had no intention of hurting the feelings of an estimable public servant,’ writes the editor; ‘and our remarks on the chicken-pox were general, not personal. We sincerely trust that Master Massinger Blazes has recovered from that complaint, and that he may pass through the measles, the whooping-cough, the fourth form, and all other diseases to which youth is subject, with

comfort to himself, and credit to his parents and teachers.' At his next appearance on the stage after this controversy, a British public calls for Blazes three times after the play, and somehow there is sure to be some one with a laurel-wreath in a stage-box, who flings that chaplet at the inspired artist's feet.

I don't know how it was, but before the *début* of Morgiana the English press began to heave and throb in a convulsive manner, as if indicative of the near birth of some great thing. For instance, you read in one paper,—

Anecdote of Karl Maria von Weber.—When the author of *Oberon* was in England, he was invited by a noble duke to dinner, and some of the most celebrated of our artists were assembled to meet him. The signal being given to descend to the *salle-à-manger*, the German composer was invited by his noble host (a bachelor) to lead the way. 'Is it not the fashion in your country,' said he, simply, 'for the man of the first eminence to take the first place? Here is one whose genius entitles him to be first *anywhere*.' And, so saying, he pointed to our admirable English composer, Sir George Thrum. The two musicians were friends to the last, and Sir George has still the identical piece of rosin which the author of the *Freischütz* gave him.—*The Moon* (morning paper), June 2.

George III a Composer.—Sir George Thrum has in his possession the score of an air, the words from *Samson Agonistes*, an autograph of the late revered monarch. We hear that that excellent composer has in store for us not only an opera, but a pupil, with whose transcendent merits the *élite* of our aristocracy are already familiar.—*Ibid.* June 5.

Music with a Vengeance.—The march to the sound of which the 49th and 75th regiments rushed up the breach of Badajoz was the celebrated air from *Britons Alarmed; or, the Siege of Bergen-op-Zoom*, by our famous English composer, Sir George Thrum. Marshal Davoust said that the French line never stood when that air was performed to the charge of the bayonet. We hear the veteran musician has an opera now about to appear, and have no doubt that *Old England* will now, as then, show its superiority over all foreign opponents.—*Albion*.

We have been accused of preferring the *produit* of the *étranger* to the talent of our own native shores;—but those who speak so, little know us. We are *fanatici per la musica* wherever it be, and welcome merit *dans chaque pays du monde*. What do we say? *Le mérite n'a point de pays*, as Napoleon said; and Sir George Thrum (Chevalier de l'Ordre de l'Éléphant et Château de Panama) is a maestro, whose fame *appartient à l'Europe*.

We have just heard the lovely *élève*, whose rare qualities the Cavaliere has brought to perfection,—we have heard THE RAVENS-

WING (*pourquoi cacher un nom que demain un monde va saluer ?*), and a creature more beautiful and gifted never bloomed before *dans nos climats*. She sung the delicious duet of the 'Nabucodonosore,' with Count Pizzicato, with a *bellezza*, a *grandezza*, a *raggio*, that excited in the bosom of the audience a corresponding *furor*: her *scherzando* was exquisite, though we confess we thought the concluding *fioritura* in the passage in Y flat a leetle, a very leetle *sforzato*. Surely the words,—

Giorno d'orrore,
Delire, dolore,
Nabucodonosore,

should be given *andante*, and not *con strepito*? but this is a *faute bien légère* in the midst of such unrivalled excellence, and only mentioned here that we may have *something* to criticize.

We hear that the enterprising *impresario* of one of the royal theatres has made an engagement with the Diva; and, if we have a regret, it is that she should be compelled to sing in the unfortunate language of our rude northern clime, which does not *prêter* itself near so well to the *bocca* of the *cantatrice* as do the mellifluous accents of the *Lingua Toscana*, the *langue par excellence* of song.

The Ravenswing's voice is a magnificent contra-basso of nine octaves, &c.—*Flowers of Fashion*, June 10.

Old Thrum, the composer, is bringing out an opera and a pupil. The opera is good, the pupil first-rate. The opera will do much more than compete with the infernal twaddle and disgusting slip-slop of Donizetti, and the milk-and-water fools who imitate him: it will (and we ask the readers of the *Tomahawk*, were we EVER mistaken?) surpass all these; it is *good*, of downright English stuff. The airs are fresh and pleasing, the choruses large and noble, the instrumentation solid and rich, the music is carefully written. We wish old Thrum and his opera well.

His pupil is a SURE CARD, a splendid woman, and a splendid singer. She is so handsome that she might sing as much out of tune as Miss Ligonier, and the public would forgive her; and sings so well, that were she as ugly as the aforesaid Ligonier, the audience would listen to her. The Ravenswing, that is her fantastical theatrical name (her real name is the same with that of a notorious scoundrel in the Fleet, who invented the Panama swindle, the Pontine marshes swindle, the soap swindle—*how are you off for soap now*, Mr. W-lk-r?), the Ravenswing, we say, will do. Slang has engaged her at thirty guineas per week, and she appears next month in Thrum's opera, of which the words are written by a great ass with some talent, we mean Mr. Mulligan.

There is a foreign fool in the *Flowers of Fashion* who is doing his best to disgust the public by his filthy flattery. It is enough to make one sick. Why is the foreign beast not kicked out of the paper?—*The Tomahawk*, June 17.

The three first 'anecdotes' were supplied by Mulligan

to his paper, with many others which need not here be repeated; he kept them up with amazing energy and variety. Anecdotes of Sir George Thrum met you unexpectedly in queer corners of country papers; puffs of the English school of music appeared perpetually in 'notices to correspondents' in the Sunday prints, some of which Mr. Slang commanded, and in others over which the indefatigable Mulligan had a control. This youth was the soul of the little conspiracy for raising Morgiana into fame; and humble as he is, and great and respectable as is Sir George Thrum, it is my belief that the Ravenswing would never have been the Ravenswing she is but for the ingenuity and energy of the honest Hibernian reporter.

It is only the business of the great man who writes the leading articles which appear in the large type of the daily papers to compose those astonishing pieces of eloquence; the other parts of the paper are left to the ingenuity of the sub-editor, whose duty it is to select paragraphs, reject or receive horrid accidents, police reports, &c.; with which, occupied as he is in the exercise of his tremendous functions, the editor himself cannot be expected to meddle. The fate of Europe is his province, the rise and fall of empires, and the great questions of state demand the editor's attention: the humble puff, the paragraph about the last murder, or the state of the crops, or the sewers in Chancery Lane, is confided to the care of the sub; and it is curious to see what a prodigious number of Irishmen exist among the sub-editors of London. When the *Liberator* enumerates the services of his countrymen, how the battle of Fontenoy was won by the Irish brigade, how the battle of Waterloo would have been lost but for the Irish regiments, and enumerates other acts for which we are indebted to Milesian heroism and genius,—he ought at least to mention the Irish brigade of the press, and the amazing services they do to this country.

The truth is, the Irish reporters and soldiers appear to do their duty right well; and my friend Mr. Mulligan is one of the former. Having the interests of his opera and the Ravenswing strongly at heart, and being amongst his brethren an exceedingly popular fellow, he managed matters so that never a day passed but some paragraph appeared somewhere regarding the new singer, in whom,

for their countryman's sake, all his brothers and sub-editors felt an interest.

These puffs, destined to make known to all the world the merits of the Ravenswing, of course had an effect upon a gentleman very closely connected with that lady, the respectable prisoner in the Fleet, Captain Walker. As long as he received his weekly two guineas from Mr. Woolsey, and the occasional half-crowns which his wife could spare in her almost daily visits to him, he had never troubled himself to inquire what her pursuits were, and had allowed her (though the worthy woman longed with all her might to betray herself) to keep her secret. He was far from thinking, indeed, that his wife would prove such a treasure to him.

But when the voice of fame and the columns of the public journals brought him each day some new story regarding the merits, genius, and beauty of the Ravenswing: when rumours reached him that she was the favourite pupil of Sir George Thrum; when she brought him five guineas after singing at the Philharmonic (other five the good soul had spent in purchasing some smart new cockades, hats, cloaks, and laces, for her little son); when, finally, it was said that Slang, the great manager, offered her an engagement at thirty guineas per week, Mr. Walker became exceedingly interested in his wife's proceedings, of which he demanded from her the fullest explanation.

Using his marital authority, he absolutely forbade Mrs. Walker's appearance on the public stage; he wrote to Sir George Thrum a letter expressive of his highest indignation that negotiations so important should ever have been commenced without his authorization; and he wrote to his dear Slang (for these gentlemen were very intimate, and in the course of his transactions as an agent Mr. W. had had many dealings with Mr. S.) asking his dear Slang whether the latter thought his friend Walker would be so green as to allow his wife to appear on the stage, and he remain in prison with all his debts on his head?

And it was a curious thing now to behold how eager those very creditors who but yesterday (and with perfect correctness) had denounced Mr. Walker as a swindler; who had refused to come to any composition with him, and had sworn never to release him—how they on a sudden became quite eager to come to an arrangement with him, and offered,

may, begged and prayed him to go free,—only giving them his own and Mrs. Walker's acknowledgement of their debt, with a promise that a part of the lady's salary should be devoted to the payment of the claim.

'The lady's salary!' said Mr. Walker, indignantly, to these gentlemen and their attorneys. 'Do you suppose I will allow Mrs. Walker to go on the stage?—do you suppose I am such a fool as to sign bills to the full amount of these claims against me, when in a few months more I can walk out of prison without paying a shilling? Gentlemen, you take Howard Walker for an idiot. I like the Fleet, and rather than pay I'll stay here for these ten years.'

In other words, it was the captain's determination to make some advantageous bargain for himself with his creditors and the gentlemen who were interested in bringing forward Mrs. Walker on the stage. And who can say that in so determining he did not act with laudable prudence and justice?

'You do not, surely, consider, my very dear sir, that half the amount of Mrs. Walker's salaries is too much for my immense trouble and pains in teaching her?' cried Sir George Thrum (who, in reply to Walker's note, thought it most prudent to wait personally on that gentleman). 'Remember that I am the first master in England; that I have the best interest in England; that I can bring her out at the Palace, and at every concert and musical festival in England; that I am obliged to teach her every single note that she utters; and that without me she could no more sing a song than her little baby could walk without its nurse.'

'I believe about half what you say,' said Mr. Walker.

'My dear Captain Walker! would you question my integrity? Who was it that made Mrs. Millington's fortune,—the celebrated Mrs. Millington, who has now got a hundred thousand pounds? Who was it that brought out the finest tenor in Europe, Poppleton? Ask the *Musical World*, ask those great artists themselves, and they will tell you they owe their reputation, their fortune, to Sir George Thrum.'

'It is very likely,' replied the captain, coolly. 'You are a good master, I dare say, Sir George; but I am not going to article Mrs. Walker to you for three years, and sign her articles in the Fleet. Mrs. Walker shan't sing till I'm

a free man, that's flat ; if I stay here till you're dead she shan't.'

'Gracious powers, sir !' exclaimed Sir George, 'do you expect me to pay your debts ?'

'Yes, old boy,' answered the captain, 'and to give me something handsome in hand, too ; and that's my ultimatum : and so I wish you good morning, for I'm engaged to play a match at tennis below.'

This little interview exceedingly frightened the worthy knight, who went home to his lady in a delirious state of alarm occasioned by the audacity of Captain Walker.

Mr. Slang's interview with him was scarcely more satisfactory. He owed he said, four thousand pounds. His creditors might be brought to compound for five shillings in the pound. He would not consent to allow his wife to make a single engagement until the creditors were satisfied, and until he had a handsome sum in hand to begin the world with. 'Unless my wife comes out, you'll be in the *Gazette* yourself, you know you will. So you may take her or leave her, as you think fit.'

'Let her sing one night as a trial,' said Mr. Slang.

'If she sings one night, the creditors will want their money in full,' replied the captain. 'I shan't let her labour, poor thing, for the profit of those scoundrels !' added the prisoner, with much feeling. And Slang left him with a much greater respect for Walker than he had ever before possessed. He was struck with the gallantry of the man who could triumph over misfortunes, nay, make misfortune itself an engine of good luck.

Mrs. Walker was instructed instantly to have a severe sore throat. The journals in Mr. Slang's interest deplored this illness pathetically ; while the papers in the interest of the opposition theatre magnified it with great malice. 'The new singer,' said one, 'the great wonder which Slang promised us, is as hoarse as a *raven* !' 'Dr. Thorax pronounces,' wrote another paper, 'that the quinsy, which has suddenly prostrated Mrs. Ravenswing, whose singing at the Philharmonic, previous to her appearance at the T. R——, excited so much applause, has destroyed the lady's voice for ever. We luckily need no other prima donna, when that place, as nightly thousands acknowledge, is held by Miss Ligonier.' The *Looker-on* said that 'Although some well-informed contemporaries had declared

Mrs. W. Ravenswing's complaint to be a quinsy, others, on whose authority they could equally rely, had pronounced it to be a consumption. At all events, she was in an exceedingly dangerous state, from which, though we do not expect, we heartily trust she may recover. Opinions differ as to the merits of this lady, some saying that she was altogether inferior to Miss Ligonier, while other connoisseurs declare the latter lady to be by no means so accomplished a person. This point, we fear, continued the *Looker-on*, 'can never now be settled, unless, which we fear is improbable, Mrs. Ravenswing should ever so far recover as to be able to make her *début* ; and even then, the new singer will not have a fair chance unless her voice and strength shall be fully restored. This information, which we have from exclusive resources, may be relied on,' concluded the *Looker-on*, 'as authentic.'

It was Mr. Walker himself, that artful and audacious Fleet prisoner, who concocted those very paragraphs against his wife's health which appeared in the journals of the Ligonier party. The partisans of that lady were delighted, the creditors of Mr. Walker astounded, at reading them. Even Sir George Thrum was taken in, and came to the Fleet prison in considerable alarm.

'Mum's the word, my good sir !' said Mr. Walker. 'Now is the time to make arrangements with the creditors.'

Well, these arrangements were finally made. It does not matter how many shillings in the pound satisfied the rapacious creditors of Morgiana's husband. But it is certain that her voice returned to her all of a sudden upon the captain's release. The papers of the Mulligan faction again trumpeted her perfections ; the agreement with Mr. Slang was concluded ; that with Sir George Thrum the great composer satisfactorily arranged ; and the new opera underlined in immense capitals in the bills, and put in rehearsal with immense expenditure on the part of the scene-painter and costumier.

Need we tell with what triumphant success the *Brigand's Bride* was received ? All the Irish sub-editors the next morning took care to have such an account of it as made Miss Ligonier and Baroski die with envy. All the reporters who could spare time were in the boxes to support their friend's work. All the journeymen tailors of the establish-

ment of Linsey, Woolsey & Co. had pit tickets given to them, and applauded with all their might. All Mr. Walker's friends of the Regent Club lined the side-boxes with white kid gloves; and in a little box by themselves sat Mrs. Crump and Mr. Woolsey, a great deal too much agitated to applaud—so agitated, that Woolsey even forgot to fling down the *bouquet* he had brought for the Ravenswing.

But there was no lack of those horticultural ornaments. The theatre servants wheeled away a wheelbarrow full (which were flung on the stage the next night over again); and Morgiana, blushing, panting, weeping, was led off by Mr. Poppleton, the eminent tenor, who had crowned her with one of the most conspicuous of the chaplets.

Here she flew to her husband, and flung her arms round his neck. He was flirting behind the side-scenes with Mademoiselle Flicflac, who had been dancing in the *divertissement*; and was probably the only man in the theatre of those who witnessed the embrace that did not care for it. Even Slang was affected, and said with perfect sincerity that he wished he had been in Walker's place. The manager's fortune was made, at least for the season. He acknowledged so much to Walker, who took a week's salary for his wife in advance that very night.

There was, as usual, a grand supper in the green-room. The terrible Mr. Bludyer appeared in a new coat of the well-known Woolsey cut, and the little tailor himself and Mrs. Crump were not the least happy of the party. But when the Ravenswing took Woolsey's hand, and said she never would have been there but for him, Mr. Walker looked very grave, and hinted to her that she must not, in her position, encourage the attentions of persons in that rank of life. 'I shall pay,' said he, proudly, 'every farthing that is owing to Mr. Woolsey, and shall employ him for the future. But you understand, my love, that one cannot at one's own table receive one's own tailor.'

Slang proposed Morgiana's health in a tremendous speech, which elicited cheers, and laughter, and sobs, such as only managers have the art of drawing from the theatrical gentlemen and ladies in their employ. It was observed, especially among the chorus-singers at the bottom of the table, that their emotion was intense. They had a meeting the next day and voted a piece of plate to Adolphus Slang, Esq., for his eminent services in the cause of the drama.

Walker returned thanks for his lady. That was, he said, the proudest moment of his life. He was proud to think that he had educated her for the stage, happy to think that his sufferings had not been vain, and that his exertions in her behalf were crowned with full success. In her name and his own he thanked the company, and sat down, and was once more particularly attentive to Mademoiselle Flicflac.

Then came an oration from Sir George Thrum, in reply to Slang's toast to *him*. It was very much to the same effect as the speech by Walker, the two gentlemen attributing to themselves individually the merit of bringing out Mrs. Walker. He concluded by stating that he should always hold Mrs. Walker as the daughter of his heart, and to the last moment of his life should love and cherish her. It is certain that Sir George was exceedingly elated that night, and would have been scolded by his lady on his return home but for the triumph of the evening.

Mulligan's speech of thanks, as author of the *Brigand's Bride*, was, it must be confessed, extremely tedious. It seemed there would be no end to it; when he got upon the subject of Ireland especially, which somehow was found to be intimately connected with the interests of music and the theatre. Even the choristers pooh-poohed this speech, coming though it did from the successful author, whose songs of wine, love, and battle, they had been repeating that night.

The *Brigand's Bride* ran for many nights. Its choruses were tuned on the organs of the day. Morgiana's airs, 'The Rose upon my Balcony' and 'The Lightning on the Cataract' (recitative and scena), were on everybody's lips, and brought so many guineas to Sir George Thrum that he was encouraged to have his portrait engraved, which still may be seen in the music-shops. Not many persons, I believe, bought proof impressions of the plate, price two guineas: whereas, on the contrary, all the young clerks in banks, and all the *fast* young men of the universities, had pictures of the Ravenswing in their apartments—as Biondetta (the brigand's bride), as Zelyma (in the *Nuptials of Benares*), as Barbareska (in the *Mine of Tobolsk*), and in all her famous characters. In the latter she disguises herself as an Uhlan, in order to save her father, who is in prison; and the Ravenswing looked so fascinating in this costume in pantaloons and

yellow boots, that Slang was for having her instantly in Captain Macheath, whence arose their quarrel.

She was replaced at Slang's theatre by Snooks, the rhinoceros-tamer, with his breed of wild buffaloes. Their success was immense. Slang gave a supper, at which all the company burst into tears, and assembling in the green-room next day, they, as usual, voted a piece of plate to Adolphus Slang, Esq., for his eminent services to the drama.

In the Captain Macheath dispute Mr. Walker would have had his wife yield; but on this point, and for once, she disobeyed her husband and left the theatre. And when Walker cursed her (according to his wont) for her abominable selfishness and disregard of his property, she burst into tears and said she had spent but twenty guineas on herself and baby during the year, that her theatrical dressmaker's bills were yet unpaid, and that she had never asked him how much he spent on that odious French *figurante*.

All this was true, except about the French *figurante*. Walker, as the lord and master, received all Morgiana's earnings, and spent them as a gentleman should. He gave very neat dinners at a cottage in the Regent's Park (Mr. and Mrs. Walker lived in Green Street, Grosvenor Square), he played a good deal at the Regent; but for the French *figurante*, it must be confessed, that Mrs. Walker was in a sad error; *that* lady and the captain had parted long ago; it was Madame Dolores de Tras-os-Montes who inhabited the cottage in St. John's Wood now.

But if some little errors of this kind might be attributable to the captain, on the other hand, when his wife was in the provinces, he was the most attentive of husbands; made all her bargains, and received every shilling before he would permit her to sing a note. Thus he prevented her from being cheated, as a person of her easy temper doubtless would have been, by designing managers and needy concert-givers. They always travelled with four horses; and Walker was adored in every one of the principal hotels in England. The waiters flew at his bell. The chambermaids were afraid he was a sad naughty man, and thought his wife no such great beauty; the landlords preferred him to any duke. • *He* never looked at their bills, not he! In fact his income was at least four thousand a year for some years of his life.

Master Woolsey Walker was put to Dr. Wapshot's

seminary, whence after many disputes on the doctor's part as to getting his half-year's accounts paid, and after much complaint of ill-treatment on the little boy's side, he was withdrawn, and placed under the care of the Rev. Mr. Swishtail, at Turnham Green ; where all his bills are paid by his godfather, now the head of the firm of Woolsey & Co.

As a gentleman, Mr. Walker still declines to see him ; but he has not, as far as I have heard, paid the sums of money which he threatened to refund ; and, as he is seldom at home, the worthy tailor can come to Green Street at his leisure ; and he and Mrs. Crump, and Mrs. Walker, often take the omnibus to Brentford, and a cake with them to little Woolsey at school ; to whom the tailor says he will leave every shilling of his property.

The Walkers have no other children ; but when she takes her airing in the Park she always turns away at the sight of a low phaeton, in which sits a woman with rouged cheeks, and a great number of over-dressed children with a French *bonne*, whose name, I am given to understand, is Madame Dolores de Tras-os-Montes. Madame de Tras-os-Montes always puts a great gold glass to her eye as the Ravenswing's carriage passes, and looks into it with a sneer. The two coachmen used always to exchange queer winks at each other in the ring, until Madame de Tras-os-Montes lately adopted a tremendous chasseur, with huge whiskers and a green and gold livery ; since which time the formerly named gentlemen do not recognize each other.

The Ravenswing's life is one of perpetual triumph on the stage ; and, as every one of the fashionable men about town has been in love with her, you may fancy what a pretty character she has. Lady Thrum would die sooner than speak to that unhappy young woman ; and, in fact, the Thrums have a new pupil, who is a siren without the dangerous qualities of one, who has the person of a Venus and the mind of a Muse, and who is coming out at one of the theatres immediately. Baroski says, ' De liddle Rafenschwing is just as font of me as effer ! ' People are very shy about receiving her in society ! and when she goes to sing at a concert, Miss Prim starts up and skurries off in a state of the greatest alarm, lest ' that person ' should speak to her.

Walker is voted a good, easy, rattling, gentlemanly fellow, and nobody's enemy but his own. His wife, they

say, is dreadfully extravagant; and, indeed, since his marriage, and, in spite of his wife's large income, he has been in the Bench several times, but she signs some bills and he comes out again, and is as gay and genial as ever. All mercantile speculations he has wisely long since given up; he likes to throw a main of an evening, as I have said, and to take his couple of bottles at dinner. On Friday he attends at the theatre for his wife's salary, and transacts no other business during the week. He grows exceedingly stout, dyes his hair, and has a bloated purple look about the nose and cheeks, very different from that which first charmed the heart of Morgiana.

By the way, Eglantine has been turned out of the Bower of Bloom, and now keeps a shop at Tunbridge Wells. Going down thither last year without a razor, I asked a fat, seedy man, lolling in a faded nankeen jacket at the door of a tawdry little shop in the Pantiles, to shave me. He said in reply, 'Sir, I do not practise in that branch of the profession!' and turned back into the little shop. It was Archibald Eglantine. But in the wreck of his fortunes, he still has his captain's uniform, and his Grand Cross of the order of the Elephant and Castle of Panama.

POSTSCRIPT

G. FITZ-BOODLE, ESQ., TO O. YORKE, ESQ.

ZUM TRIERISCHEN HOF, COBLENZ,
July 10, 1843.

MY DEAR YORKE,—The story of the Ravenswing was written a long time since, and I never could account for the bad taste of the publishers of the metropolis who refused it an insertion in their various magazines. This fact would never have been alluded to but for the following circumstance:—

Only yesterday, as I was dining at this excellent hotel, I remarked a bald-headed gentleman in a blue coat and brass buttons, who looked like a colonel on half-pay, and by his side a lady and a little boy of twelve, whom the gentleman was cramming with an amazing quantity of cherries and cakes. A stout old dame in a wonderful cap and ribbands was seated by the lady's side, and it was easy to see they were English, and I thought I had already made their acquaintance elsewhere.

The younger of the ladies at last made a bow with an accompanying blush.

'Surely,' said I, 'I have the honour of speaking to Mrs. Ravenswing?'

‘Mrs. WOOLSEY, sir,’ said the gentleman; ‘my wife has long since left the stage:’ and at this the old lady in the wonderful cap trod on my toes very severely, and nodded her head and all her ribands in a most mysterious way. Presently the two ladies rose and left the table; the elder declaring that she heard the baby crying.

‘Woolsey, my dear, go with your mamma,’ said Mr. Woolsey, patting the boy on the head: the young gentleman obeyed the command, carrying off a plate of macaroons with him.

‘Your son is a fine boy, sir,’ said I.

‘My stepson, sir,’ answered Mr. Woolsey; and added in a louder voice, ‘I knew you, Mr. Fitz-Boodle, at once, but did not mention your name for fear of agitating my wife. She don’t like to have the memory of old times renewed, sir; her former husband, whom you knew, Captain Walker, made her very unhappy. He died in America, sir, of this, I fear’ (pointing to the bottle), ‘and Mrs. W. quitted the stage a year before I quitted business. Are you going on to Wiesbaden?’

They went off in their carriage that evening, the boy on the box making great efforts to blow out of the postilion’s tasselled horn.

I am glad that poor Morgiana is happy at last, and hasten to inform you of the fact: I am going to visit the old haunts of my youth at Pumpnickel. Adieu. Yours,

G. F.-B.

III

DENNIS HAGGARTY'S WIFE

[*Fraser's Magazine*, October, 1843.]

THERE was an odious Irishwoman and her daughter who used to frequent the Royal Hotel at Leamington some years ago, and who went by the name of Mrs. Major Gam. Gam had been a distinguished officer in his Majesty's service, whom nothing but death and his own amiable wife could overcome. The widow mourned her husband in the most becoming bombast she could muster, and had at least half an inch of lamp-black round the immense visiting tickets which she left at the houses of the nobility and gentry her friends.

Some of us, I am sorry to say, used to call her Mrs. Major Gammon; for if the worthy widow had a propensity, it was to talk largely of herself and family (of her own family, for she held her husband's very cheap), and of the wonders of her paternal mansion, Molloyville, County of Mayo. She was of the Molloy family of that county; and though I never heard of the family before, I have little doubt, from what Mrs. Major Gam stated, that they were the most ancient and illustrious family of that part of Ireland. I remember there came down to see his aunt a young fellow with huge red whiskers and tight nankeens, a green coat and an awful breastpin, who, after two days' stay at the Spa, proposed marriage to Miss S—, or, in default, a duel with her father; and who drove a flash curricule with a bay and a grey, and who was presented with much pride by Mrs. Gam as Castlekeagh Molloy of Molloyville. We all agreed that he was the most insufferable snob of the whole season, and were delighted when a bailiff came down in search of him.

Well, this is all I know personally of the Molloyville family; but at the house if you met the Widow Gam, and talked on any subject in life, you were sure to hear of it.

If you asked her to have peas at dinner, she would say, 'Oh, sir, after the peas at Molloyville. I really don't care for any others,—do I, dearest Jemima? We always had a dish in the month of June, when my father gave his head gardener a guinea (we had three at Molloyville), and sent him with his compliments and a quart of peas to our neighbour dear Lord Marrowfat. What a sweet place Marrowfat Park is! isn't it, Jemima?' If a carriage passed by the window, Mrs. Major Gammon would be sure to tell you that there were three carriages at Molloyville, 'the barouche, the chawiot, and the covered cyar.' In the same manner she would favour you with the number and names of the footmen of the establishment; and on a visit to Warwick Castle (for this bustling woman made one in every party of pleasure that was formed from the hotel), she gave us to understand that the great walk by the river was altogether inferior to the principal avenue of Molloyville Park. I should not have been able to tell so much about Mrs. Gam and her daughter, but that, between ourselves. I was particularly sweet upon a young lady at the time, whose papa lived at the Royal, and was under the care of Dr. Jephson.

The Jemima appealed to by Mrs. Gam in the above sentence was, of course, her daughter, apostrophized by her mother, 'Jemima, my soul's darling!' or, 'Jemima, my blessed child!' or, 'Jemima, my own love!' The sacrifices that Mrs. Gam had made for that daughter were, she said, astonishing. The money she had spent in masters upon her, the illnesses through which she had nursed her, the ineffable love the mother bore her, were only known to Heaven, Mrs. Gam said. They used to come into the room with their arms round each other's waists: at dinner between the courses the mother would sit with one hand locked in her daughter's: and if only two or three young men were present at the time, would be pretty sure to kiss her Jemima more than once during the time whilst the bohea was poured out.

As for Miss Gam, if she was not handsome, candour forbids me to say she was ugly. She was neither one nor t'other. She was a person who wore ringlets and a band round her forehead; she knew four songs, which became rather tedious at the end of a couple of months' acquaintance; she had excessively bare shoulders; she inclined to wear numbers of cheap ornaments, rings, brooches, *ferro-*

nières, smelling-bottles, and was always, we thought, very smartly dressed, though old Mrs. Lynx hinted that her gowns and her mother's were turned over and over again, and that her eyes were almost put out by darning stockings.

These eyes Miss Gam had very large, though rather red and weak, and used to roll them about at every eligible unmarried man in the place. But though the widow subscribed to all the balls, though she hired a fly to go to the meet of the hounds, though she was constant at church, and Jemima sang louder than any person there except the clerk, and though, probably, any person who made her a happy husband would be invited down to enjoy the three footmen, gardeners, and carriages at Molloyville, yet no English gentleman was found sufficiently audacious to propose. Old Lynx used to say that the pair had been at Tunbridge, Harrogate, Brighton, Ramsgate, Cheltenham, for this eight years past, where they had met, it seemed, with no better fortune. Indeed, the widow looked rather high for her blessed child; and as she looked with the contempt which no small number of Irish people feel upon all persons who get their bread by labour or commerce; and as she was a person whose energetic manners, costume, and brogue, were not much to the taste of quiet English country gentlemen, Jemima,—sweet, spotless flower,—still remained on her hands, a thought withered, perhaps, and seedy.

Now, at this time, the 120th regiment was quartered at Weedon Barracks, and with the corps was a certain Assistant-Surgeon Haggarty, a large, lean, tough, raw-boned man, with big hands, knock-knees, and carrotty whiskers, and, withal, as honest a creature as ever handled a lancet. Haggarty, as his name imports, was of the very same nation as Mrs. Gam, and, what is more, the honest fellow had some of the peculiarities which belonged to the widow, and bragged about his family almost as much as she did. I do not know of what particular part of Ireland they were kings, but monarchs they must have been, as have been the ancestors of so many thousand Hibernian families; but they had been men of no small consideration in Dublin, 'Where my father,' Haggarty said, 'is as well known as King William's statue, and where he "rowls his carriage, too," let me tell ye.'

Hence Haggarty was called by the wags 'Rowl the

carriage,' and several of them made inquiries of Mrs. Gam regarding him : ' Mrs. Gam, when you used to go up from Molloyville to the Lord Lieutenant's balls, and had your town-house in Fitzwilliam Square, used you to meet the famous Doctor Haggarty in society ? '

' Is it Surgeon Haggarty of Gloucester Street ye mean ? The black Papist ! D'ye suppose that the Molloyes would sit down to table with a creature of that sort ? '

' Why, isn't he the most famous physician in Dublin, and doesn't he rowl his carriage there ? '

' The horrid wretch ! He keeps a shop, I tell ye, and sends his sons out with the medicine. He's got four of them off into the army, Ulick and Phil, and Terence and Denny, and now it's Charles that takes out the physic. But how should I know about these odious creatures ? Their mother was a Burke of Burke's Town, County Cavan, and brought Surgeon Haggarty two thousand pounds. She was a Protestant ; and I am surprised how she could have taken up with a horrid, odious, Popish apothecary ! '

From the extent of the widow's information, I am led to suppose that the inhabitants of Dublin are not less anxious about their neighbours than are the natives of English cities ; and I think it is very probable that Mrs. Gam's account of the young Haggarties who carried out the medicine is perfectly correct, for a lad in the 120th made a caricature of Haggarty coming out of a chemist's shop with an oilcloth basket under his arm, which set the worthy surgeon in such a fury that there would have been a duel between him and the ensign, could the fiery doctor have had his way.

Now, Dionysius Haggarty was of an exceedingly inflammable temperament, and it chanced that of all the invalids, the visitors, the young squires of Warwickshire, the young manufacturers from Birmingham, the young officers from the barracks, it chanced unluckily for Miss Gam and himself, that he was the only individual who was in the least smitten by her personal charms. He was very tender and modest about his love, however, for it must be owned that he respected Mrs. Gam hugely, and fully admitted, like a good simple fellow as he was, the superiority of that lady's birth and breeding to his own. How could he hope that he, a humble assistant-surgeon, with a thousand pounds his aunt Kitty left him for all his fortune,—how

could he hope that one of the race of Molloyville would ever condescend to marry him ?

Inflamed, however, by love, and inspired by wine, one day at a picnic at Kenilworth, Haggarty, whose love and raptures were the talk of the whole regiment, was induced by his waggish comrades to make a proposal in form.

'Are you aware, Mr. Haggarty, that you are speaking to a Molloy ?' was all the reply majestic Mrs. Gam made when, according to the usual formula, the fluttering Jemima referred her suitor to 'mamma.' She left him with a look which was meant to crush the poor fellow to earth, she gathered up her cloak and bonnet, and precipitately called for her fly. She took care to tell every single soul in Leamington that the son of the odious Papist apothecary had had the audacity to propose for her daughter (indeed a proposal, coming from whatever quarter it may, does no harm), and left Haggarty in a state of extreme depression and despair.

His downheartedness, indeed, surprised most of his acquaintances in and out of the regiment, for the young lady was no beauty and a doubtful fortune, and Dennis was a man outwardly of an unromantic turn, who seemed to have a great deal more liking for beefsteak and whisky-punch than for women, however fascinating.

But there is no doubt this shy, uncouth, rough fellow had a warmer and more faithful heart hid within him than many a dandy who is as handsome as Apollo. I, for my part, never can understand why a man falls in love, and heartily give him credit for so doing, never mind with what or whom. *That* I take to be a point quite as much beyond an individual's own control as the catching of the small-pox or the colour of his hair. To the surprise of all, Assistant-Surgeon Dionysius Haggarty was deeply and seriously in love ; and I am told that one day he very nearly killed the before-mentioned young ensign with a carving-knife, for venturing to make a second caricature, representing Lady Gammon and Jemima in a fantastical park, surrounded by three gardeners, three carriages, three footmen, and the covered cyar. He would have no joking concerning them. He became moody and quarrelsome of habit. He was for some time much more in the surgery and hospital than in the mess. He gave up the eating, for the most part, of those vast quantities of beef and pudding, for which his

stomach had used to afford such ample and swift accommodation ; and when the cloth was drawn, instead of taking twelve tumblers, and singing Irish melodies, as he used to do, in a horrible cracked yelling voice, he would retire to his own apartment or gloomily pace the barrack-yard, or madly whip and spur a grey mare he had on the road to Leamington where his Jemima (although invisible for him) still dwelt.

The season at Leamington coming to a conclusion by the withdrawal of the young fellows who frequented that watering-place, the Widow Gam retired to her usual quarters for the other months of the year. Where these quarters were, I think we have no right to ask, for I believe she had quarrelled with her brother at Molloyville, and besides, was a great deal too proud to be a burden on anybody.

Not only did the widow quit Leamington, but very soon afterwards the 120th received its marching orders, and left Weedon and Warwickshire. Haggarty's appetite was by this time partially restored, but his love was not altered and his humour was still morose and gloomy. I am informed that at this period of his life he wrote some poems relative to his unhappy passion, a wild set of verses of several lengths, and in his handwriting, being discovered upon a sheet of paper in which a pitch-plaster was wrapt up, which Lieutenant and Adjutant Wheezer was compelled to put on for a cold.

Fancy, then, three years afterwards, the surprise of all Haggarty's acquaintances on reading in the public papers the following announcement :—

Married, at Monkstown-on the 12th instant, Dionysius Haggarty, Esq., of H.M. 120th Foot, to Jemima Amelia Wilhelmina Molloy, daughter of the late Major Lancelot Gam, R.M., and granddaughter of the late, and niece of the present Burke Bodkin Blake Molloy, Esq., Molloyville, County Mayo.

Has the course of true love at last begun to run smooth ? thought I, as I laid down the paper ; and the old times, and the old leering, bragging widow, and the high shoulders of her daughter, and the jolly days with the 120th, and Doctor Jephson's one-horse chaise, and the Warwickshire hunt, and—and Louisa S——, but never mind *her*, came back to my mind. Has that good-natured, simple fellow

at last met with his reward ? Well, if he has not to marry the mother-in-law too, he may get on well enough.

Another year announced the retirement of Assistant-Surgeon Haggarty from the 120th, where he was replaced by Assistant-Surgeon Angus Rothsay Leach, a Scotchman, probably, with whom I have not the least acquaintance, and who has nothing whatever to do with this little history.

Still more years passed on, during which time I will not say that I kept a constant watch upon the fortunes of Mr. Haggarty and his lady, for, perhaps, if the truth were known, I never thought for a moment about them ; until one day, being at Kingstown, near Dublin, dawdling on the beach, and staring at the Hill of Howth, as most people at that watering-place do, I saw coming towards me a tall gaunt man, with a pair of bushy red whiskers, of which I thought I had seen the like in former years, and a face which could be no other than Haggarty's. It was Haggarty, ten years older than when we last met, and greatly more grim and thin. He had on one shoulder a young gentleman in a dirty tartan costume, and a face exceedingly like his own peeping from under a battered plume of black feathers, while with his other hand he was dragging a light green go-cart, in which reposed a female infant of some two years old. Both were roaring with great power of lungs.

As soon as Dennis saw me his face lost the dull, puzzled expression which had seemed to characterize it ; he dropped the pole of the go-cart from one hand, and his son from the other, and came jumping forward to greet me with all his might, leaving his progeny roaring in the road.

'Bless my sowl,' says he, 'sure it's Fitz-Boodle ? Fitz, don't you remember me ? Dennis Haggarty of the 120th ? Leamington, you know ? Molloy, my boy, hould your tongue, and stop your screeching, and Jemima's too ; d'ye hear ? Well, it does good to sore eyes to see an old face. How fat you're grown, Fitz ; and were ye ever in Ireland before ? and an't ye delighted with it ? Confess, now ; isn't it beautiful ?'

This question regarding the merits of their country, which I have remarked is put by most Irish persons, being answered in a satisfactory manner, and the shouts of the infants appeased from an apple-stall hard by, Dennis and I talked of old times, and I congratulated him on his

marriage with the lovely girl whom we all admired, and hoped he had a fortune with her, and so forth. His appearance, however, did not bespeak a great fortune; he had an old grey hat, short old trousers, an old waistcoat with regimental buttons, and patched blucher boots, such as are not usually sported by persons in easy life.

'Ah!' says he, with a sigh, in reply to my queries, 'times are changed since them days, Fitz-Boodle. My wife's not what she was—the beautiful creature you knew her. Molloy, my boy, run off in a hurry to your mamma, and tell her an English gentleman is coming home to dine, for you'll dine with me, Fitz, in course?' And I agreed to partake of that meal, though Master Molloy altogether declined to obey his papa's orders with respect to announcing the stranger.

'Well, I must announce you myself,' said Haggarty, with a smile. 'Come, it's just dinner-time, and my little cottage is not a hundred yards off.' Accordingly, we all marched in procession to Dennis's little cottage, which was one of a row and a half of one-storied houses, with little courtyards before them and mostly with very fine names on the door-posts of each. 'Surgeon Haggarty' was emblazoned on Dennis's gate, on a stained green copper-plate; and, not content with this, on the door-post above the bell was an oval with the inscription of 'New Molloyville.' The bell was broken, of course; the court, or garden-path, was mouldy, weedy, seedy; there were some dirty rocks, by way of ornament, round a faded grass-plot in the centre, some clothes and rags hanging out of most part of the windows of New Molloyville, the immediate entrance to which was by a battered scraper, under a broken trellis-work, up which a withered creeper declined any longer to climb.

'Small, but snug,' says Haggarty. 'I'll lead the way, Fitz; put your hat on the flower-pot there, and turn to the left into the drawing-room.' A fog of onions and turf-smoke filled the whole of the house, and gave signs that dinner was not far off. Far off? You could hear it frizzling in the kitchen, where the maid was also endeavouring to hush the crying of a third refractory child. But as we entered, all three of Haggarty's darlings were in full war.

'Is it you, Dennis?' cried a sharp raw voice, from a dark corner in the drawing-room to which we were

introduced, and in which a dirty table-cloth was laid for dinner, some bottles of porter and a cold mutton-bone being laid out on a rickety grand-piano hard by. 'Ye're always late, Mr. Haggarty. Have you brought the whisky from Nowlan's? I'll go bail ye've not now.'

'My dear, I've brought an old friend of yours and mine to take pot-luck with us to-day,' said Dennis.

'When is he to come?' said the lady. At which speech I was rather surprised, for I stood before her.

'Here he is, Jemima, my love,' answered Dennis, looking at me. 'Mr. Fitz-Boodle; don't you remember him in Warwickshire, darling?'

'Mr. Fitz-Boodle! I am very glad to see him,' said the lady, rising and curtsying with much cordiality.

Mrs. Haggarty was blind.

Mrs. Haggarty was not only blind, but it was evident that small-pox had been the cause of her loss of vision. Her eyes were bound with a bandage, her features were entirely swollen, scarred and distorted by the horrible effects of the malady. She had been knitting in a corner when we entered, and was wrapped in a very dirty bed-gown. Her voice to me was quite different to that in which she addressed her husband. She spoke to Haggarty in broad Irish, she addressed me in that most odious of all languages—Irish-English, endeavouring to the utmost to disguise her brogue, and to speak with the true dawdling *distingué* English air.

'Are you long in I-a-land?' said the poor creature in this accent. 'You must faind it a sad ba'ba'ous place, Mr. Fitz-Boodle, I'm shu-ah! It was vary kaind of you to come upon us *en famille*, and accept a dinner *sans cérémonie*. Mr. Haggarty, I hope you'll put the waine into aice, Mr. Fitz-Boodle must be melted with this hot weathah.'

For some time she conducted the conversation in this polite strain, and I was obliged to say in reply to a query of hers, that I did not find her the least altered, though I should never have recognized her but for this rencontre. She told Haggarty with a significant air to get the wine from the cellah, and whispered to me that he was his own butlah, and the poor fellow taking the hint scudded away into the town for a pound of veal cutlets and a couple of bottles of wine from the tavern.

'Will the children get their potatoes and butther here?'

said a barefoot girl, with long black hair flowing over her face, which she thrust in at the door.

'Let them sup in the nursery, Elizabeth, and send—ah! Edwards to me.'

'Is it cook you want, ma'am?' said the girl.

'Send her at once!' shrieked the unfortunate woman; and the noise of frying presently ceasing, a hot woman made her appearance wiping her brows with her apron, and asking, with an accent decidedly Hibernian, what the mistress wanted.

'Lead me up to my dressing-room. Edwards, I really am not fit to be seen in this deshabille by Mr. Fitz-Boodle.'

'Fait' I can't!' says Edwards; 'sure the mather's out at the butcher's, and can't look to the kitchen fire!'

'Nonsense. I must go!' cried Mrs. Haggarty; and so Edwards, putting on a resigned air, and giving her arm and face a further rub with her apron, held out her arm to Mrs. Dennis, and the pair went upstairs.

She left me to indulge my reflections for half an hour, at the end of which period she came downstairs dressed in an old yellow satin, with the poor shoulders exposed just as much as ever. She had mounted a tawdry cap, which Haggarty himself must have selected for her. She had all sorts of necklaces, bracelets, and ear-rings in gold, in garnets, in mother-of-pearl, in ormolu. She brought in a furious savour of musk, which drove the odours of onions and turf-smoke before it; and she waved across her wretched, angular, mean, scarred features, an old cambric handkerchief with a yellow lace border.

'And so you would have known me anywhere. Mr. Fitz-Boodle?' said she, with a grin that was meant to be most fascinating. 'I was sure you would; for though my dreadful illness deprived me of my sight, it is a mercy that it did not change my features or complexion at all!'

This mortification had been spared the unhappy woman; but I don't know whether with all her vanity, her infernal pride, folly, and selfishness, it was charitable to leave her in her error.

Yet why correct her? There is a quality in certain people which is above all advice, exposure, or correction. Only let a man or woman have DULLNESS sufficient, and they need bow to no extant authority. A dullard recognizes no betters; a dullard can't see that he is in the wrong; a

dullard has no scruples of conscience, no doubts of pleasing, or succeeding, or doing right, no qualms for other people's feelings, no respect but for the fool himself. How can you make a fool perceive that he is a fool? Such a personage can no more see his own folly than he can see his own ears. And the great quality of Dullness is to be unalterably contented with itself. What myriads of souls are there of this admirable sort,—selfish, stingy, ignorant, passionate, brutal, bad sons, mothers, fathers, never known to do kind actions!

To pause, however, in this disquisition which was carrying us far off Kingstown, New Molloyville, Ireland,—nay, into the wide world wherever Dullness inhabits, let it be stated that Mrs. Haggarty, from my brief acquaintance with her and her mother, was of the order of persons just mentioned. There was an air of conscious merit about her, very hard to swallow along with the infamous dinner poor Dennis managed, after much delay, to get on the table. She did not fail to invite me to Molloyville, where she said her cousin would be charmed to see me; and she told me almost as many anecdotes about that place as her mother used to impart in former days. I observed, moreover, that Dennis cut her the favourite pieces of the beefsteak, that she ate thereof with great gusto, and that she drank with similar eagerness of the various strong liquors at table. 'We Irish ladies are all fond of a leetle glass of punch,' she said, with a playful air, and Dennis mixed her a powerful tumbler of such violent grog as I myself could swallow only with some difficulty. She talked of her suffering a great deal, of her sacrifices, of the luxuries to which she had been accustomed before marriage,—in a word, of a hundred of those themes on which some ladies are in the custom of enlarging when they wish to plague some husbands.

But honest Dennis, far from being angry at this perpetual, wearisome, impudent recurrence to her own superiority, rather encouraged the conversation than otherwise. It pleased him to hear his wife discourse about her merits and family splendours. He was so thoroughly beaten down and henpecked, that he, as it were, gloried in his servitude, and fancied that his wife's magnificence reflected credit on himself. He looked towards me, who was half sick of the woman and her egotism, as if expecting me to exhibit the deepest sympathy, and flung me glances across the table,

as much as to say, 'What a gifted creature my *Jemima* is, and what a fine fellow I am to be in possession of her!' When the children came down she scolded them, of course, and dismissed them abruptly (for which circumstance, perhaps, the writer of these pages was not in his heart very sorry), and, after having sat a preposterously long time, left us, asking whether we would have coffee there or in her boudoir.

'Oh! here, of course,' said Dennis, with rather a troubled air, and in about ten minutes the lovely creature was led back to us again by 'Edwards,' and the coffee made its appearance. After coffee her husband begged her to let Mr. Fitz-Boodle hear her voice: 'He longs for some of his old favourites.'

'No! *do* you?' said she; and was led in triumph to the jingling old piano, and with a screechy, wiry voice, sang those very abominable old ditties which I had heard her sing at Leamington ten years back.

Haggarty, as she sang, flung himself back in his chair delighted. Husbands always are, and with the same song, one that they have heard when they were nineteen years old, probably; most Englishmen's tunes have that date, and it is rather affecting, I think, to hear an old gentleman of sixty or seventy quavering the old ditty that was fresh when *he* was fresh and in his prime. If he has a musical wife, depend on it he thinks her old songs of 1788 are better than any he has heard since; in fact he has heard *none* since. When the old couple are in high good-humour the old gentleman will take the old lady round the waist, and say, 'My dear, do sing me one of your own songs,' and she sits down and sings with her old voice, and, as she sings, the roses of her youth bloom again for a moment. *Ranelagh* resuscitates, and she is dancing a minuet in powder and a train.

This is another digression. It was occasioned by looking at poor Dennis's face while his wife was screeching (and, believe me, the former was the most pleasant occupation). Bottom tickled by the fairies could not have been in greater ecstasies. He thought the music was divine; and had further reason for exulting in it, which was, that his wife was always in a good humour after singing, and never would sing but in that happy frame of mind. Dennis had hinted so much in our little colloquy during the ten minutes of his lady's absence in the 'boudoir'; so, at the conclusion of

each piece, we shouted ' Bravo ! ' and clapped our hands like mad.

Such was my insight into the life of Surgeon Dionysius Haggarty and his wife ; and I must have come upon him at a favourable moment too, for poor Dennis has spoken, subsequently, of our delightful evening at Kingstown, and evidently thinks to this day that his friend was fascinated by the entertainment there. His inward economy was as follows : he had his half-pay, a thousand pounds, about a hundred a-year that his father left, and his wife had sixty pounds a-year from the mother, which the mother, of course, never paid. He had no practice, for he was absorbed in attention to his Jemima and the children, whom he used to wash, to dress, to carry out, to walk, or to ride, as we have seen, and who could not have a servant, as their dear blind mother could never be left alone. Mrs. Haggarty, a great invalid, used to lie in bed till one, and have breakfast and hot luncheon there. A fifth part of his income was spent in having her wheeled about in a chair, by which it was his duty to walk daily for an allotted number of hours. Dinner would ensue, and the amateur clergy, who abound in Ireland, and of whom Mrs. Haggarty was a great admirer, lauded her everywhere as a model of resignation and virtue, and praised beyond measure the admirable piety with which she bore her sufferings.

Well, every man to his taste. It did not certainly appear to me that *she* was the martyr of the family.

' The circumstances of my marriage with Jemima,' Dennis said to me, in some after conversations we had on this interesting subject, ' were the most romantic and touching you can conceive. You saw what an impression the dear girl had made upon me when we were at Weedon ; for from the first day I set eyes on her, and heard her sing her delightful song of " Dark-eyed Maiden of Araby," I felt, and said to Turniquet of ours, that very night, that *she* was the dark-eyed maid of Araby for *me*,—not that she was, you know, for she was born in Shropshire. But I felt that I had seen the woman who was to make me happy or miserable for life. You know how I proposed for her at Kenilworth, and how I was rejected, and how I almost shot myself in consequence,—no, you don't know that, for I said nothing about it to any one, but I can tell you it was a very near thing, and a very lucky thing for me I didn't do it, for,—

would you believe it ?—the dear girl was in love with me all the time.’

‘Was she really ?’ said I, who recollected that Miss Gam’s love of those days showed itself in a very singular manner ; but the fact is, when women are most in love they most disguise it.

‘Over head and ears in love with poor Dennis,’ resumed that worthy fellow, ‘who’d ever have thought it ? But I have it from the best authority, from her own mother, with whom I’m not over and above good friends now, but of this fact she assured me, and I’ll tell you when and how.

‘We were quartered at Cork three years after we were at Weedon, and it was our last year at home, and a great mercy that my dear girl spoke in time, or where should we have been *now* ? Well, one day, marching home from parade, I saw a lady seated at an open window by another, who seemed an invalid, and the lady at the window, who was dressed in the profoundest mourning, cried out, with a scream, “Gracious Heavens ! it’s Mr. Haggarty of the 120th.”

“Sure I know that voice,” says I to Whiskerton.

“It’s a great mercy you don’t know it a deal too well,” says he, “it’s Lady Gammon. She’s on some husband-hunting scheme, depend on it, for that daughter of hers. She was at Bath last year on the same errand, and at Cheltenham the year before, where, Heaven bless you ! she’s as well known as the Hen and Chickens.”

“I’ll thank you not to speak disrespectfully of Miss Jemima Gam,” said I to Whiskerton ; “she’s of one of the first families in Ireland, and whoever says a word against a woman I once proposed for, insults me,—do you understand !”

“Well, marry her, if you like,” says Whiskerton, quite peevish, “marry her, and be hanged !”

‘Marry her ! the very idea of it set my brain a-whirling, and made me a thousand times more mad than I am by nature.

‘You may be sure I walked up the hill to the parade-ground that afternoon, and with a beating heart too. I came to the widow’s house. It was called “New Molloyville,” as this is. Wherever she takes a house for six months, she calls it “New Molloyville” ; and has had one in Mallow, in Bandon, in Sligo, in Castlebar, in Fermoy, in Drogheda,

and the deuce knows where besides ; but the blinds were down, and though I thought I saw somebody behind 'em, no notice was taken of poor Denny Haggarty, and I paced up and down all mess-time in hopes of catching a glimpse of Jemima, but in vain. The next day I was on the ground again ; I was just as much in love as ever, that's the fact. I'd never been in that way before, look you, and when once caught, I knew it was for life.

‘There's no use in telling you how long I beat about the bush, but when I *did* get admittance to the house (it was through the means of young Castlereagh Molloy, whom you may remember at Leamington, and who was at Cork for the regatta, and used to dine at our mess, and had taken a mighty fancy to me), when I *did* get into the house, I say, I rushed *in medias res* at once ; I couldn't keep myself quiet, my heart was too full.

‘Oh, Fitz ! I shall never forget the day,—the moment I was introjuiced into the dthrawing-room’ (as he began to be agitated, Dennis's brogue broke out with greater richness than ever, but though a stranger may catch, and repeat from memory, a few words, it is next to impossible for him to *keep up a conversation* in Irish, so that we had best give up all attempts to imitate Dennis), ‘when I saw old Mother Gam,’ said he, ‘my feelings overcame me all at once ; I rowled down on the ground, sir, as if I'd been hit by a musket-ball, “Dearest madam,” says I, “I'll die if you don't give me Jemima.”’

“Heavens ! Mr. Haggarty,” says she, “how you seize me with surprise ! Castlereagh, my dear nephew, had you not better leave us ?” and away he went, lighting a cigar, and leaving me still on the floor.

“Rise, Mr. Haggarty,” continued the widow. “I will not attempt to deny that this constancy towards my daughter is extremely affecting, however sudden your present appeal may be. I will not attempt to deny that, perhaps, Jemima may feel a similar ; but, as I said, I never could give my daughter to a Catholic.”

“I'm as good a Protestant as yourself, ma'am,” says I ; “my mother was an heiress, and we were all brought up her way.”

“That makes the matter very different,” says she, turning up the whites of her eyes. “How could I ever have reconciled it to my conscience to see my blessed child

married to a Papist ? How could I ever have taken him to Molloyville ? Well, this obstacle being removed, I must put myself no longer in the way between two young people. I must sacrifice myself, as I always have when my darling girl was in question. You shall see her, the poor, dear, lovely, gentle sufferer, and learn your fate from her own lips."

" "The sufferer, ma'am," says I; "has Miss Gam been ill ?"

" "What ! haven't you heard !" cried the widow. "Haven't you heard of the dreadful illness which so nearly carried her from me ? For nine weeks, Mr. Haggarty, I watched her day and night, without taking a wink of sleep,—for nine weeks she lay trembling between death and life, and I paid the doctor eighty-three guineas. She is restored now, but she is the wreck of the beautiful creature she was. Suffering, and, perhaps, *another disappointment*—but we won't mention that *now*—have pulled her so down. But I will leave you, and prepare my sweet girl for this strange, this entirely unexpected visit."

"I won't tell you what took place between me and Jemima, to whom I was introduced as she sat in the darkened room, poor sufferer ! nor describe to you with what a thrill of joy I seized (after groping about for it) her poor emaciated hand. She did not withdraw it ; I came out of that room an engaged man, sir ; and *now* I was enabled to show her that I had always loved her sincerely, for there was my will, made three years back, in her favour ; that night she refused me, as I told ye, I would have shot myself, but they'd have brought me in *non compos*, and my brother Mick would have contested the will, and so I determined to live, in order that she might benefit by my dying. I had but a thousand pounds then, since that my father has left me two more ; I willed every shilling upon her, as you may fancy, and settled it upon her when we married, as we did soon after. It was not for some time that I was allowed to see the poor girl's face, or, indeed, was aware of the horrid loss she had sustained. Fancy my agony, my dear fellow, when I saw that beautiful wreck !"

There was something not a little affecting to think, in the conduct of this brave fellow ; that he never once, as he told his story, seemed to allude to the possibility of his declining to marry a woman who was not the same as the

woman he loved ; but that he was quite as faithful to her now, as he had been when captivated by the poor, tawdry charms of the silly miss of Leamington. It was hard that such a noble heart as this should be flung away upon yonder foul mass of greedy vanity. Was it hard, or not, that he should remain deceived in his obstinate humility, and continue to admire the selfish, silly being whom he had chosen to worship ?

‘ I should have been appointed surgeon of the regiment,’ continued Dennis, ‘ soon after, when it was ordered abroad to Jamaica, where it now is. But my wife would not hear of going, and said she would break her heart if she left her mother. So I retired on half-pay, and took this cottage ; and in case any practice should fall in my way, why there is my name on the brass plate, and I’m ready for anything that comes. But the only case that ever *did* come was one day when I was driving my wife in the chaise, and another, one night of a beggar with a broken head. My wife makes me a present of a baby every year, and we’ve no debts ; and between you and me and the post, as long as my mother-in-law is out of the house, I’m as happy as I need be.’

‘ What, you and the old lady don’t get on well ? ’ said I.

‘ I can’t say we do ; it’s not in nature, you know,’ said Dennis, with a faint grin. ‘ She comes into the house, and turns it topsy-turvy. When she’s here I’m obliged to sleep in the scullery. She’s never paid her daughter’s income since the first year, though she brags about her sacrifices as if she had ruined herself for Jemima ; and besides, when she’s here, there’s a whole clan of the Molloyes, horse, foot, and dragoons, that are quartered upon us, and eat me out of house and home.’

‘ And is Molloyville such a fine place as the widow described it ? ’ asked I, laughing, and not a little curious.

‘ Oh, a mighty fine place entirely ! ’ said Dennis. ‘ There’s the oak park of two hundred acres, the finest land ye ever saw, only they’ve cut all the wood down. The garden in the old Molloy’s time, they say, was the finest ever seen in the west of Ireland ; but they’ve taken all the glass to mend the house windows, and small blame to them either. There’s a clear rent-roll of three and fifty hundred a-year, only it’s in the hand of receivers ; besides other debts, on which there is no land security.’

'Your cousin-in-law, Castlereagh Molloy, won't come into a large fortune?'

'Oh, he'll do very well,' said Dennis. 'As long as he can get credit, he's not the fellow to stint himself. Faith, I was fool enough to put my name to a bit of paper for him, and they could not catch him in Mayo; they laid hold of me at Kingstown here. And there was a pretty to do. Didn't Mrs. Gam say I was ruining her family, that's all? I paid it by instalments (for all my money is settled on *Jemima*); and Castlereagh, who's an honourable fellow, offered me any satisfaction in life. Anyhow, he couldn't do more than *that*.'

'Of course not, and now you're friends.'

'Yes, and he and his aunt have had a tiff, too; and he abuses her properly, I warrant ye. He says that she carried about *Jemima* from place to place, and flung her at the head of every unmarried man in England a'most,—my poor *Jemima*, and she all the while dying in love with me! As soon as she got over the small-pox—she took it at Fermoy—God bless her, I wish I'd been by to be her nurse-tender,—as soon as she was rid of it, the old lady said to Castlereagh, 'Castlereagh, go to the bar'cks, and find out in the army list where the 120th is.' Off she came to Cork hot foot. It appears that while she was ill, *Jemima's* love for me showed itself in such a violent way that her mother was overcome, and promised that, should the dear child recover, she would try and bring us together. Castlereagh says she would have gone after us to Jamaica.'

'I have no doubt she would,' said I.

'Could you have a stronger proof of love than that?' cried Dennis. 'My dear girl's illness and frightful blindness have, of course, injured her health and her temper. She cannot in her position look to the children, you know, and so they come under my charge for the most part; and her temper is unequal, certainly. But you see what a sensitive, refined, elegant creature she is, and may fancy that she's often put out by a rough fellow like me.'

Here Dennis left me, saying it was time to go and walk out the children; and I think his story has matter of some wholesome reflection in it for bachelors who are about to change their condition, or may console some who are mourning their celibacy. Marry, gentlemen, if you like; leave your comfortable dinner at the club for cold mutton and curl-papers at your home; give up your books or

pleasures, and take to yourselves wives and children ; but think well on what you do first, as I have no doubt you will after this advice and example. Advice is always useful in matters of love ; men always take it ; they always follow other people's opinions, not their own : they always profit by example. When they see a pretty woman, and feel the delicious madness of love coming over them, they always stop to calculate her temper, her money, their own money, or suitability for the married life. . . . Ha, ha, ha ! Let us fool in this way no more. I have been in love forty-three times with all ranks and conditions of women, and would have married every time if they would have let me. How many wives had King Solomon, the wisest of men ? And is not that story a warning to us that Love is master of the wisest ? It is only fools who defy him.

I must come, however, to the last, and perhaps the saddest, part of poor Denny Haggarty's history. I met him once more, and in such a condition as made me determine to write this history.

In the month of June last, I happened to be at Richmond, a delightful little place of retreat ; and there, sunning himself upon the terrace, was my old friend of the 120th ; he looked older, thinner, poorer, and more wretched, than I had ever seen him.

'What ! you have given up Kingstown ?' said I, shaking him by the hand.

'Yes,' says he.

'And is my lady and your family here at Richmond ?'

'No,' says he, with a sad shake of the head ; and the poor fellow's hollow eyes filled with tears.

'Good Heavens, Denny ! what's the matter ?' said I. He was squeezing my hand like a vice as I spoke.

'They've LEFT me !' he burst out with a dreadful shout of passionate grief—a horrible scream which seemed to be wrenched out of his heart ; 'left me !' said he, sinking down on a seat, and clenching his great fists, and shaking his lean arms wildly. 'I'm a wise man now, Mr. Fitz-Boodle. *Jemima* has gone away from me, and yet you know how I loved her, and how happy we were ! I've got nobody now ; but I'll die soon, that's one comfort ; and to think it's she that'll kill me after all !'

The story, which he told with a wild and furious lamentation such as is not known among men of our cooler country,

and such as I don't like now to recall, was a very simple one. The mother-in-law had taken possession of the house, and had driven him from it. His property at his marriage was settled on his wife. She had never loved him, and told him this secret at last, and drove him out of doors with her selfish scorn and ill temper. The boy had died ; the girls were better, he said, brought up among the Molloyes than they could be with him ; and so he was quite alone in the world, and was living, or rather dying, on forty pounds a year.

His troubles are very likely over by this time. The two fools who caused his misery will never read this history of him ; *they* never read godless stories in magazines ; and I wish, honest reader, that you and I went to church as much as they do. These people are not wicked *because* of their religious observances, but *in spite* of them. They are too dull to understand humility ; too blind to see a tender and simple heart under a rough ungainly bosom. They are sure that all their conduct towards my poor friend here has been perfectly righteous, and that they have given proofs of the most Christian virtue. Haggarty's wife is considered by her friends as a martyr to her savage husband, and her mother is the angel that has come to rescue her. All they did was to cheat him and desert him. And safe in that wonderful self-complacency with which the fools of this earth are endowed, they have not a single pang of conscience for their villany towards him, and consider their heartlessness as a proof and consequence of their spotless piety and virtue.

IV

THE —'S WIFE

[*Fraser's Magazine*, November, 1843.]

WE lay down on a little mound at a half-league from the city gates in a pleasant grass besprinkled with all the flowers of summer. The river went shining by us, jumping over innumerable little rocks, and by beds of waving, whispering rushes, until it reached the old city bridge with its dismantled tower and gate, under the shadow of which sat Maximilian in his eternal punt bobbing for gudgeon. Farther on you saw the ancient city walls and ramparts, with the sentinels pacing before the blue-and-yellow barriers, and the blue eagle of Pumpernickel over the gate. All the towers and steeples of the town rose behind the grim bastions under the clear blue sky; the bells were ringing as they always are, the birds in the little wood hard by were singing and chirping, the garden-houses and taverns were full of students drinking beer, and resounded with their choruses. To the right was the old fortress, with its gables and pinnacles cresting the huge hill, up which a zigzag path toiled painfully.

'It is easier,' said I, with much wisdom, 'to come down that hill than to mount it.' I suppose the robber knights who inhabited Udolf of old, chose the situation for that reason. If they saw a caravan in the plain here, they came down upon it with an impetus that infallibly overset the guards of the merchants' treasure. If the dukes took a fancy to attack it, the escaladers, when they reached the top of the eminence, were so out of wind that they could be knocked over like so many penguins, and were cut down before they had rallied breath enough to cry quarter. From Udolf you could batter the town to pieces in ten minutes. What a skurry there would be if a shell fell plump into the

market-place, and what a deal of eggs and butter would be smashed there ! Hark ! there is a bugle.

‘ It is the mad trumpeter,’ said Schneertbart. ‘ Half the fortress is given up now to the madmen of the principality, and the other half is for the felons. See ! there is a gang of them at work on the road yonder.’

‘ Is Udolf any relation of the Castle of Udolpho ? ’

‘ It has its mysteries,’ said Milchbrod, nodding his head solemnly, ‘ as well as that castle which Lord Byron has rendered immortal. Was it not Lord Byron ? ’

‘ Caspar Milchbrod, I believe it was,’ answered I. ‘ Do you know any of them ? If you have a good horrid story of ghosts, robbers, cut-throats, and murders, pray tell it ; we have an hour yet to dinner, and murder is my delight ! ’

‘ I shall tell you the story of Angelica, the wife of the —— HUM ! ’ said he.

‘ Whose wife ? ’

‘ That is the point of the story. You may add it to your histories of “ Men’s Wives,” that are making such a sensation all over England and Germany. Listen ! ’

Schneertbart, at the mention of the story, first jumped up as if he would make off ; but being fat and of an indolent turn, he thought better of it, and pulling the flap of his cap over his face, and sprawling out on his back, like the blue spread-eagle over the gate, incontinently fell asleep.

Milchbrod, darting at him a look of scorn, began the following history :

‘ In the time of Duke Bernard the Invincible, whose victory over Sigismund of Kalbsbratia obtained for him the above well-merited title (for though he was beaten several times afterwards, yet his *soul* was encouraged to the end, and therefore he was denominated Invincible with perfect justice)—in Duke Bernard’s time, the fortress of Udolf was much more strongly garrisoned than at present, though a prison then as now. The great hall, where you may now see the poor madmen of the duchy eating their humble broth from their wooden trenchers and spoons, was the scene of many a gallant feast, from which full butts of wine returned empty ; fat oxen disappeared, all except the bone ; at which noble knights got drunk by the side of spotless ladies, and were served off gold and out of jewelled flagons by innumerable pages and domestics in the richest of liveries. A sad change is it now, my friend. When I think the livery

of the place is an odious red-and-yellow serg't, that the servants of the castle have their heads shaved, and a chain to their legs instead of round their necks, and when I think that the glories and festivities of Udolf are now passed away for ever!—O golden days of chivalry, a descendant of the Milchbrods may well deplore you!

'The court where they beat hemp now was once a stately place of arms, where warriors jousted and knights ran at the ring. Ladies looked on from the windows of the great hall, and from the castellan's apartments, and though the castle was gay and lordly as a noble castle should be, yet were not the purposes of security and punishment forgotten; under the great hall were innumerable dungeons, vaults, and places of torture, where the enemies of our dukes suffered the punishment of their crimes. They have been bricked up now for the most part, for what I cannot but call a foolish philanthropy found these dungeons too moist and too dark for malefactors of the present day, who must, forsooth, have whitewashed rooms and dry beddings, whilst our noble ancestors were fain to share their cell with toads, serpents, and darkness; and sometimes, instead of flock mattresses and iron bedsteads, to stretch their limbs on the rack. Civilization, my dear sir,—'

Here a loud snort from Schneertbart possibly gave Milchbrod a hint that he was digressing too much; and, omitting his opinions about civilization, he proceeded.

'In Duke Bernard's time, then, this prison was in its most palmy and flourishing state. The pains of the rack and the axe were at that time much more frequent than at present, and the wars of religion in which Germany was plunged, and in which our good duke, according to his convictions, took alternately the Romanist and the Reformed side, brought numbers of our nobles into arms, into conspiracies and treasons, and, consequently, into prison and torture-chambers. I mention these facts to show that, as the prison was a place of some importance and containing people of rank, the guardianship was naturally confided to a person in whom the duke could place the utmost confidence. Have you ever heard of the famous Colonel Dolchenblitz?'

I confessed I had not.

'Dolchenblitz, as a young man, was one of the most illustrious warriors of his day; and, as a soldier, captain,

and afterwards colonel of free companies, had served under every flag in every war and in every country in Europe. He, under the French, conquered the Milanese; he then passed over into the Spanish service, and struck down King Francis at Pavia with his hammer-of-arms; he was the fourth over the wall of Rome when it was sacked by the Constable, and having married and made a considerable plunder there, he returned to his native country, where he distinguished himself alternately in the service of the emperor and the Reformed princes. A wound in the leg prevented him at length from being so active in the field as he had been accustomed to be; and Duke Bernard the Invincible, knowing his great bravery, his skill, his unalterable fidelity (which was indestructible as long as his engagement lasted), and his great cruelty and sternness, chose him very properly to be governor of his state fortress and prison.

'The lady whom Colonel Dolchenblitz married was a noble and beautiful Roman, and his wooing of her, it would appear, was somewhat short. "I took the best method of winning Frau Dolchenblitz's heart," he would say. "I am an ugly old trooper, covered with scars, fond of drink and dice, with no more manners than my battle-horse, and she, forsooth, was in love with a young countlet who was as smooth as herself, and as scented as a flower-garden; but when my black-riders dragged her father and brother into the courtyard, and had ropes ready to hang them at the gate, I warrant my Angelica found that she loved me better than her scented lover; and so I saved the lives of my father- and brother-in-law, and the dear creature consented to be mine.'

'Of this marriage there came but one child, a daughter; and the Roman lady presently died, not altogether sound in her senses, it was said, from the treatment to which her rough husband subjected her. The widower did not pretend to much grief; and the daughter, who had seen her mother sneered at, sworn at, beaten daily when her gallant father was in liquor, had never had any regard for her poor mother; and in her father's quarrels with his lady, used from her earliest years to laugh and rejoice and take the old trooper's side. You may imagine from this,' cried Milchbrod, 'that she was brought up in a very amiable school. Ah!' added the youth, with a blush,

'how unlike was she, in all respects but in beauty, to my Lischen!

'There is still in the castle gallery a picture of the Angelica, who bore the reputation at eighteen of being one of the most beautiful women in the world. She is represented in a dress of red velvet, looped up at the sleeves and breast with jewels, her head is turned over her shoulder, looking at you, and her long yellow hair flows over her neck. Her eyes are blue, her eyebrows of an auburn colour, her lips open and smiling; but that smile is so diabolical, and those eyes have such an infernal twinkle, that it is impossible to look at the picture without a shudder, and I declare, for my part, that I would not like to be left alone in a room with the portrait and its horrid glassy eyes always following and leering after you.

'From a very early age her father would always insist upon having her by his side at table, where I promise you the conversation was not always as choice as in a nunnery; and where they drank deeper than at a hermitage. After dinner the dice would be brought, and the little girl often called the mains and threw for her father, and he said she always brought him luck when she did so. But this must have been a fancy of the old soldier's, for, in spite of his luck, he grew poorer and poorer, all his plunder taken in the wars went gradually down the throat of the dice-box, and he was presently so poor that his place as governor of the prison was his only means of livelihood, and that he could only play once a month when his pay came in.

'In spite of his poverty and his dissolute life and his ill treatment of his lady, he was inordinately proud of his marriage; for the truth is, the lady was of the Colonna family. There was not a princess of Germany who in the matter of birth was more haughty than Madame Angelica, the governor's daughter; and the young imp of Lucifer, when she and her father sat at drink and dice with the lance-knights and officers, always too the *pas* of her own father, and had a raised seat for herself, while her company sat on benches. The old soldier admired this pride in his daughter, as he admired every other good or bad quality she possessed. She had often seen the prisoners flogged in the courtyard, and never turned pale. "*Par Dieu!*" the father would say, "the girl has a gallant courage!" If she lost at dice she would swear in her shrill voice as

well as any trooper, and the father would laugh till the tears ran down his old cheeks. She could not read very well, but she could ride like an Amazon; and Count Sprinboch (the court chamberlain, who was imprisoned ten years at Udolf for treading on the duchess-dowager's gouty toe), taking a fancy to the child, taught her to dance and to sing to the mandolin, in both of which accomplishments she acquired great skill.

'Such were the accomplishments of the Angelica, when, at about the sixteenth year of her age, the court came to reside in the town; for the Imperialists were in possession of our residence, and here, at a hundred miles away from them, Duke Bernard the Invincible was free from molestation. On the first public day the governor of the fort came down in his litter to pay his respects to the sovereign, and his daughter, the lovely Angelica, rode a white palfrey, and ambled most gracefully at his side.

'The appearance of such a beauty set all the court-gallants in a flame. Not one of the maids of honour could compare with her, and their lovers left them by degrees. The steep road up to the castle yonder was scarcely ever without one or more cavaliers upon it pinked out in their best, as gay as feathers and chains could make them, and on the way to pay their court to the Lily of Udolf; the Lily—the Tiger-lily, forsooth! But man, foolish man, looked only to the face, and not to the soul, as I did when I selected my Lischen.

'The drinking and dicing now went on more gaily than it had done for many years; for when young noblemen go to sit down to play with a lady, we know who it is that wins, and Madame Angelica was, *pardi*, not squeamish in gaining their money. It was, "Fair sir, I will be double or quits with you;" "Noble Baron, I will take your three to one;" "Worthy Count, I will lay my gold chain against your bay gelding." And so forth. And by the side of the lovely daughter sat the old father, tossing the drink off, and flinging the dice, and roaring, swearing, and singing, like a godless old trooper as he was. Then, of mornings, there would be hunting and hawking parties, and it was always who should ride by the Angelica's side, and who should have the best horse and the finest doublet, and leap the biggest ditch, over which she could jump, I warrant you, as well as the best rider there. The staid

ladies and matrons of the court avoided this siren, but what cared she so long as the men were with her? The duke did not like to see his young men thus on the road to ruin; but his advice and his orders were all in vain. The Erb-Prinz himself, Prince Maurice, was caught by the infection, and having fallen desperately in love with the Angelica, and made her great presents of jewels and horses, was sent by his father to Wittenberg, where he was told to forget his love in his books.

There was, however, in the duke's service, and an especial friend and favourite of the hereditary prince, a young gentleman by the name of Ernst von Walddberg, who, though sent back to the university along with the young duke, had not the heart to remain there, for indeed his heart was at Castle Udolf with the bewitching Angelica. This unlucky and simple Ernst was the most passionate of all the Angelica's admirers, and had committed a thousand extravagances for her sake. He had ridden into Hungary and brought back a Turkish turban for her, with an unbeliever's head in it, too. He had sold half his father's estate and bought a jewel with it, with which he presented her. He had wagered a hundred gold crowns against a lock of her hair, and, having won, caused a casket to be made with the money, on which was engraved an inscription by the court poet, signifying that the gold within the casket was a thousand times more valuable than the gold whereof it was made, and that one was the dross of the earth, whereas the other came from an angel.

'An angel, indeed! If they had christened that Angelica Diabolica, they would have been nearer the mark; but the devils were angels once, and one of these fallen ones was Angelica.

'When the poor young fellow had wellnigh spent his all in presents and jewels for Angelica, or over the tables and dice with her father, he bethought him that he would ask the young lady in marriage, and so humbly proffered his suit.

"How much land have you, my lord Ernst?" said she, in a scornful way.

"Alas! I am but a younger son. My brother Max has the family estate, and I but an old tower and a few acres, which came to me from my mother's family," answered Ernst. But he did not say how his brother had often paid

his debts and filled his purse, and how many of the elder's crowns had been spent over the dice-table and had gone to enrich Angelica and her father.

"But you must have great stores of money," continued she, "for what gentleman of the court spends so gallantly as you?"

"It is my brother's money," said Ernst, gloomily, "and I will ask him for no more of it. But I have enough left to buy a horse and a sword, and with these if you will but be mine, I vow to win fame and wealth enough for any princess in Christendom."

"A horse and sword!" cried Angelica: "a pretty fortune, forsooth. Any one of my father's troopers has as much! *You* win fame and wealth? *You* a fitting husband for the best lady in Christendom? Psha! Look what you have done as yet, Sir Ernst, and brag no more. You had a property, and you spent it in three months upon a woman you never saw before. I have no fancy to marry a beggar, or to trust to an elder brother for charity, or to starve in rags with the rats in your family tower. Away with you, Sir Spendthrift, buy your horse and sword if you will, and go travel and keep yourself and your horse; you will find the matter hard enough without having a wife at your pillion."

And, so saying, she called her huntsman and hawks, and with a gay train of gentlemen behind her, went out into the woods, as usual, where Diana herself, had she been out a-hunting that day, could not have been more merry, or looked more beautiful and royal.

As for Ernst, when he found how vain his love was, and that he had only been encouraged by Angelica, in order to be robbed and cast away, a deep despair took possession of the poor lad's soul, and he went in anguish back to his brother's house, who tried, but in vain, to console him; for, having stayed awhile with his brother, Ernst one morning suddenly took horse and rode away never to return. The next thing that his weeping elder brother heard of him was that he had passed into Hungary, and had been slain by the Turk before Buda. One of his comrades in the war brought back a token from Ernst to his brother Max—it was the gold casket which contained the hair of Angelica.

Angelica no more wept at receiving this news than

she had done at Ernst's departure. She hunted with her gallants as before, and on the very night after she had heard of poor young Ernst's death appeared at supper in a fine gold chain and scarlet robe he had given her. The hardness of her heart did not seem to deter the young gentlemen of Saxony from paying court to her, and her cruelty only added to the universal fame of her beauty.

Though she had so many scores of lovers, and knew well enough that these do not increase with age, she had never as yet condescended to accept of one for a husband, and others, and of the noblest sort, might be mentioned, who, as well as Ernst, had been ruined and forsaken by her. A certain witch had told her that she should marry a nobleman who should be the greatest swordsman of his day. Who was the greatest warrior of Germany? I am not sure that she did not look for King Gustave to divorce his wife and fall on his knees to her, or for dark Wallenstein to conjure the death of his princess and make Angelica the lady of Sagan. Thus time went on. Lovers went up the hill of Udolf, and, in sooth! lovers came down; the lady there was still the loveliest of the land, and when the crown prince came home from Wittenberg, she would still have been disposed to exercise her wiles upon him, but that it was now too late, for the wise duke, his highness's father, had married the young lord to a noble princess of Bavaria, in whose innocence he forgot the dangerous and wicked Angelica. I promise you the lady of Udolf sneered prettily at the new princess, and talked of "his highness's hump-backed Venus"; all which speeches were carried to court, and inspired the duke with such a fury, that he was for shutting up Angelica as a prisoner in her father's own castle; but wise counsellors intervened, and it was thought best to let the matter drop. For, indeed, comparisons between the royal princess and the lady of Udolf would have been only unfavourable to the former, who, between ourselves, was dark of complexion, and not quite so straight either in the back as was her rival.

. 'Presently there came to court Max, Ernst's elder brother, a grave man, of a sharp and bitter wit, given to books and studies, but, withal, gentle and generous to the poor. No one knew how generous until he died, when there followed, weeping, such crowds of the humbler sort, his body to the grave as never was known in that day, for the

good old nobles were rather accustomed to take than to give, and the Lord Max was of the noblest and richest of all the families of the duchy.

‘Calm as he was, yet, strange to say, he, too, was speedily caught in the toils of Angelica, and seemed to be as much in love with her as his unfortunate brother had been. “I do not wonder at Ernst’s passion for such an angelical being,” he said, “and can fancy any man dying in despair of winning her.” These words were carried quickly, to the lady of Udolf, and the next court party where she met Max she did not fail to look towards him with all the fascinations of her wonderful eyes, from which Max, blushing and bowing, retired completely overcome. You might see him on his grey horse riding up the mountain to Udolf as often as his brother had been seen on his bay; and of all the devoted slaves Angelica had in her court, this unhappy man became the most subservient. He forsook his books and calm ways of life to be always by the enchantress’s side; he, who had never cared for sport, now, for the pleasure of following Angelica, became a regular Nimrod of the chase; and although, up to the time of his acquaintance with her, he had abhorred wine and gaming, he would pass nights now boozing with the old drunkard her father, and playing at the dice with him and his daughter.

‘There was something in his love for her that was quite terrible. Common, light-minded gallants of the day do not follow a woman as Max did, but, if rebuffed by one, fly off to another; or, if overcome by a rival, wish him good luck and betake themselves elsewhere. This ardent gentleman, loving for the first time, seemed resolved to have no rival near him, and Angelica could scarcely pardon him for the way in which he got rid of her lovers one after another. There was Baron Herman, who was much in her good graces, and was sent away to England by Max’s influence with the duke; there was Count Augustus, with whom he picked a quarrel, and whom he wounded in a duel. All the world deplored the infatuation of this brave gentleman, and the duke himself took him to task for suffering himself to be enslaved by a woman who had already been so fatal to his family.

‘He placed himself as such a dragon before her gate that he drove away all wavering or faint-hearted pretenders to her hand; and it seemed pretty clear that Angelica,

if she would not marry him, would find it very difficult to marry another. And why not marry him? He was noble, rich, handsome, wise, and brave. What more could a lady require in a husband? And could the proud Angelica expect a better fate? "In my mother's lifetime," Max said, "I cannot marry. She is old now, and was much shaken by the death of Ernst, and she would go to the grave with a curse on her lips for me did she think I was about to marry the woman who caused my brother's death."

'Thus, although he did not actually offer his hand to her, he came to be generally considered as her accepted lover; and the gallants who before had been round her, fell off one by one. I am not sure whether Madame Angelica was pleased with the alteration, and whether she preferred the adoration of a single heart to the love of many, to which she had been accustomed before. Perhaps, however, her reasoning was this, "I am sure of Max; he is a husband of whom any woman might be proud; and very few nobles in Germany are richer or of better blood than he. He cannot marry for some time to come. Well, I am young, and can afford to wait; and if, meanwhile, there present itself some better name, fortune, and person than Max's, I am free to choose, and can fling him aside like his brother before him." Meantime, thought she, I can dress Max to the *ménage* of matrimony; which meant, that she could make a very slave of him, as she did; and he was as obedient to her caprice and whims as her page or her waiting-woman.

'The entertainments which were given at Castle Udolf were rather more liked by the gentlemen than by the ladies, who had little love for a person like Angelica, the daughter of a man only ennobled yesterday—a woman who lived, laughed, rode, gambled, in the society of men as familiarly as if she had a beard on her chin and a rapier by her side; and, above all, a woman who was incomparably handsomer than the handsomest of her rivals. Thus ladies' visits to her were not frequent; nor, indeed, did she care much for their neglect. She was not born, she said, to spin flax; nor to embroider cushions; nor to look after housemaids and scullions, as ladies do. She received her male guests as though she were a queen, to whom they came to pay homage, and little cared that their wives stayed at home.

'At one of her entertainments Max appeared with two masks (it was the custom in those days for persons to go

so disguised, and you would see at a court ball half the ladies, and men, especially the ugly of the former sex, so habited); the one, coming up to Angelica, withdrew his vizard, and she saw it was her ancient admirer the prince, who stayed for a while, besought her, laughing, to keep his visit a secret from the princess, and then left her to Max and the other mask; but the other did not remove his covering, though winningly entreated thereto by Angelica.

'The mask and Max, after a brief conversation with the lady of the castle, sat down to the tables to play at dice. And Max called presently to Angelica to come and play for him, to the which invitation, nothing loath, she acceded. That dice-box has a temptation for woman as well as man, and woe to both if they yield to it!

"Who is the mask?" asked Angelica of Max. But Max answered that his name was for the present a mystery.

"Is he noble?" said the scornful lady.

"Did he not come hither with me and the prince; and am I in the habit of consorting with other than nobles?" replied Max, as haughty as she. "The mask is a nobleman, aye, and a soldier, who has done more execution in his time than any man in the army." That he was rich was very clear; his purse was well filled; whether he lost or won, he laughed with easy gaiety; and Angelica could see under his mask how all the time of the play his fierce, brilliant eyes watched and shone on her.

'She and Max, who played against the stranger, won from him a considerable sum. "I would lose such a sum," said he, "every night, if you, fair lady, would but promise to win it from me;" and, asking for, and having been promised, a revenge, he gallantly took his leave.

'He came the next night, and the partners against him had the same good luck; a third and a fourth night Angelica received him, and as she won always, and as he was gay at losing as another is at winning, and was always ready to laugh and joke with her father, or to utter compliments to herself, Angelica began to think the stranger one of the most agreeable of men.

'She began to grudge, too, to Max, some of his winnings; or, rather, she was angry both that he should win and that he should not win enough: for Max would stop playing in the midst, as it seemed, of a vein of good luck; saying

that enough was won and lost for the night ; that play was the amusement of gentlemen, not their passion nor means of gain : whereon the mask would gather up his crowns ; and greatly to the annoyance of Angelica, the play would cease.

“If I could play with him alone,” thought she, “there is no end to the sums which I might win of this stranger ; and money we want, Heaven knows ; for my father’s pay is mortgaged thrice over to the Jews, and we owe ten times as much as we can pay.”

She found no great difficulty in managing an interview with the stranger alone. He was always willing, he said, to be at her side ; and Max being called at this time into the country, the pair met by themselves, or in the company of the tipsy old governor of Udolf, who counted for no more than an extra flagon in the room, and who would have let his daughter play for a million, or sit down to a match with the foul fiend himself, were she so minded ; and here the mask and Angelica used to pass many long evenings together.

But her lust of gain was properly punished ; for, when Max was gone, instead of winning, as she had been wont to do in his company, Fortune seemed now to desert her, and she lost night after night. Nor was the mask one of the sort of players who could be paid off with a smile, as some gallants had been ; or who would take a ringlet as a receipt for a hundred crowns ; or would play on credit, as Angelica would have done, had he been willing. “Fair lady,” said he, “I am too old a soldier to play my ducats against smiles, though they be from the loveliest lips in the world ; that which I lose I pay ; that which I win I take. Such is always the way with us in camp ; and *Donner und Blitz* ! that is the way I like best.” So the day Angelica proposed to play him on credit he put up his purse, and laughing took his leave. The next day she pawned a jewel, and engaged him again ; and, in sooth, he went off laughing, as usual, his loud laugh with the price of the emerald in his pocket.

• When they were alone, it must be said that the mask made no difficulty to withdraw his vizard, and showed a handsome, pale, wild face, with black glaring eyes, sharp teeth, and black hair and beard. When asked what he should be called, he said, “Call me Wolfgang ; but, hist ! I am in the imperial service. The duke would seize me

were he to know that I was here ; for," added he, with a horrid grin, "I slew a dear friend of his in battle." He always grinned, did Herr Wolfgang ; he laughed a hundred times a day, ate, and drank much, and swore more. There was something terrible about him ; and he loved to tell terrible stories of the wars, in which he could match for horror and cruelty Colonel Dolchenblitz himself.

"This is the man I would have for thy husband, girl," said he to his daughter ; "he is a thousand times better than your puling courtiers and pale bookworms ; a fellow that can drink his bottle, and does not fear the devil himself ; and can use his sword to carve out for himself any fortune to which he may be minded. Thou art but a child to him in play. See how he takes your ducats from you, and makes the dice obey him. Cease playing with him, girl, or he will ruin us else ; and so fill me another cup of wine."

It was in the bottom of the flagon that the last words of the old man's speeches used commonly to end ; and I am not sure that Angelica was not prepared to think the advice given a very good one ; for it was in the nature of this lovely girl to care for no man. But it seemed to her, that in daring and wickedness this man was a match for her ; and she only sighed that he should be noble and rich enough, and that then she might make him her own. For he dazzled her imagination with stories of great leaders of the day, the honours they won, and the wealth they obtained. "Think of Wallenstein," said he, "but a humble page in a lady's house ; a prince now, and almost a sovereign. Tilly was but a portionless Flemish cadet ; and think of the plunder of Magdeburg !"

"I wish I had shared it," said Angelica.

"What ! and your father a Protestant ?"

"Psha !" replied the girl. At which Herr Wolfgang and her father would burst into a hoarse laugh, and swear, with loud oaths, that she deserved to be a queen ; and would so drink her grace's health in many a bumper. And then they would fall to the dice again ; and Signer Wolfgang would win the last crown-piece in the purse of either father or daughter, and at midnight would take his leave. And a wonder was that no one knew whence he came or how he left the castle ; for the sentry at the gate never saw him pass or enter.

‘He would laugh when asked how. “Psha!” he would say, “I am *all* mystery; and I will tell, as a secret, that when I come or go, I turn myself into a bird, and fly in and out.”

‘And so, though he could only write his name, and had no more manners than a trooper, and though he won every penny of Angelica’s money from her, the girl had a greater respect and terror for him than for any man alive; and he made more way in her heart in a fortnight than many a sighing lover would do in ten years.

‘Presently, Max returned from his visit to the country; and Angelica began to make comparisons between his calm, cold, stately, sneering manner and the honest daring of Herr Wolfgang his friend. “It is a pity,” thought she, “that he should have the fine estate who could live on a book and a crust. If Herr Wolfgang had Max’s wealth, he would spend it like a prince, and his wife would be the first lady in Germany.”

‘Max came to invite Angelica to his castle of Waldberg; it was prepared to receive her as to receive a sovereign. She had never seen anything more stately than the gardens, or more costly than the furniture; and the lackeys in Max’s livery were more numerous and more splendid than those who waited on the duke himself. He took her over his farms and villages; it was a two days’ journey. He showed her his stores of plate, and his cellars, the innumerable horses in his stables, and flocks and cattle in his fields. As she saw all these treasures, her heart grew colder towards Wolfgang; and she began to think that Max would be a better husband for her. But Herr Wolfgang did not seem much cast down, though she bestowed scarce a word upon him all day.

‘“Would you take these lands and their lord, lady fair?” whispered Max to Angelica, as they were riding home.

‘“That would I!” cried she, smiling in triumph; and holding out her hand to Max, who, kissing it very respectfully, never quitted her side that day,

‘She had now only frowns for Herr Wolfgang, to whom she had been so gracious hitherto; and at supper that day, or at play afterwards, she scarce deigned to say a word to him. But he laughed, and shouted, and drank his wine as before. They played deep; but Max, the most magnificent of hosts, had always a casket filled with gold by

the side of Angelica; who, therefore, little cared to lose.

‘The next day she spent in going over the treasury of the castle, and the various chambers in it. There was one room which they passed but did not enter. “That was Ernst’s room,” said Max, looking very gloomy. “My lord, what a frown!” said Angelica; “can I bear a husband who frowns so?” and quickly passed into another chamber. At the end of the day came the dice as usual. Angelica could not live without them. They played, and Herr Wolfgang lost a very heavy sum, 5,000 crowns. But he laughed, and bade Max make out an order on his intendant, and signed it with his name.

“I can write no more than that,” said he; “but ’tis enough for a gentleman. To-morrow, Sir Max, you will give me my revenge?”

“To-morrow,” said Max, “I will promise not to balk you, and will play for any stake you will,” And so they parted.

‘The day after many lords and ladies began to arrive, and in the evening, to supper, came over from a hunting-lodge he had in the neighbourhood, his highness the hereditary prince and his princess, who were served at a table alone, Max waiting on them. “When this castle is mine,” said Angelica, “I will be princess here, and my husband shall act the lackey to no duke in Christendom.”

‘Dice and music were called as usual. “Will your highness dance or play?” But his highness preferred dancing, as he was young and active; and her highness preferred dancing, too, for she was crooked and out of shape. The prince led out Lady Angelica; and she never looked more beautiful, and swam through the dance in a royal style indeed.

As they were dancing, people came to say, “The Lord Max and Herr Wolfgang are at the dice, playing very heavy stakes.” And so it was; and Angelica, who was as eager for play as a Turk for opium, went presently to look at the players, around whom was already a crowd wondering.

‘But, much as she loved play, Angelica was frightened at the stakes played by Max and Wolfgang; for moderate as the Lord Max had been abroad, at home it seemed to be a point of honour with him to be magnificent, and he said he would refuse no stake that was offered to him.

"Three throws for 10,000 crowns," said Wolfgang. "Make out an order for my intendant if I lose, and I will sign it with my mark."

"Three throws for 10,000 crowns!—Done!" answered Max. He lost. "The order, Herr Wolfgang, must be on my intendant now, and your Austrian woods will not have to suffer. Give me my revenge."

"Twenty thousand crowns against your farm and woods of Averbach."

"They are worth only eighteen, but I said I would refuse you nothing, and cry done!" Max tossed, and lost the woods of Averbach.

"Have you not played enough, my lords, for to-day?" said Angelica, somewhat frightened.

"No!" shouted Wolfgang, with his roaring laugh. "No, in the devil's name, let us go on. I feel myself in the vein, and have Lord Max's word that he will take any bet of mine. I will play you 20,000 crowns and your farm—my farm—against your barony and village of Weinheim."

"Lord Max, I entreat—I command you not to play!" cried Angelica.

"Done!" said Max, "Weinheim against the crowns and the farm." He lost again.

In an hour this unhappy gentleman lost all the property that his forefathers had been gathering for centuries; his houses and lands, his cattle and horses, his plate, arms, and furniture. Laughing and shouting, Wolfgang still pressed him.

"I have no more," said Max: "you have my all;—but stay," said he, "I have one thing more. Here is my bride, the Lady Angelica."

"A hundred thousand crowns against her!" shouted Wolfgang.

"Fool!" said Angelica, turning scornfully on Max, "do you think I would marry a beggar? I said I would take the lord of these lands," added she, blushing, and gazing on Wolfgang.

"He is at your feet, lady," said Wolfgang, going down on his knee; and the prince at this moment coming into the room, Max said bitterly, "I brought you, my lord, to be present at a marriage and a marriage there shall be. Here is the lord of Waldberg, who weds the Lady Angelica."

"Ho! a chaplain!—a chaplain!" called the prince: and

there was one at hand, and before almost Angelica could say "yea" or "nay," she was given away to Herr Wolfgang, and the service was read, and the contract signed by the witnesses, and all the guests came to congratulate her.

"As the friend of poor dead Ernst," said the prince, "I thank you for not marrying Max."

"The humpbacked Venus congratulates you," said the princess, with a curtsy and a sneer.

"I have lost all, but still have a marriage present to make to the Lady Angelica," said Max; and he held out a gold casket, which she took. It was that one in which Ernst had kept her hair, and which he had worn at his death.

Angelica flung down the casket in a rage.

"Am I to be insulted in my own castle," she said, "and on my own marriage-day? Prince—Princess—Max of Waldberg—beggar of Waldberg, I despise and scorn you all! When it will please you to leave this house, you are welcome. Its doors will gladly open to let you out. My Lord Wolfgang, I must trust to your sword to revenge any insults that may be passed on a woman who is too weak to defend herself."

"Any who insults you insults me," said Wolfgang, at which the prince burst into a laugh.

"Coward!" said Angelica, "your principedom saves your manhood. In any other country but your own you would not dare to act as you do." And so saying, and looking as fierce as a boar at bay, glaring round at the circle of staring courtiers, and forgetting her doubts and fears in her courage and hatred, she left the room on Wolfgang's arm.

"It is a gallant woman, by Heaven!" said the prince.

The old governor of Udolf had not been present at the festival, which had ended so unluckily for the feast-giver, Herr Max, and in Angelica's sudden marriage. Certain Anabaptist rogues, who had been making a disturbance in the duchy, had been taken prisoners of late, and after having been tortured and racked for some six months, had been sentenced to death, as became the dogs; and, meanwhile, until their execution, were kept, with more than ordinary precautions, in Castle Udolf, for many of their people were still in the country, and thoughts of a rescue apprehended. The day, at last, was fixed for their death,—some three days after the sudden wedding of the Lady Angelica.

' In those three days she had ridden again over the farms and orchards; she had examined all the treasures and furnitures of her castles once more. At night she feasted with her spouse, sitting at the high table, which poor Max had prepared for the prince and princess, and causing the servants and pages to serve her upon bended knees.

"Why do these menials look so cold upon their mistress and lord?" asked she.

"Marry," said Wolfgang, "the poor devils have served the Waldberg family since they were born: they are only the more faithful for their sorrow."

"I will have yonder old scowling seneschal scourged by the huntsmen to-morrow," said Angelica.

"Do!" said Wolfgang, laughing wildly; "it will be an amusement to you, for you will be alone all to-morrow, sweet Angelica."

"And why alone, sir?" said she.

"I am called to the city on urgent business."

"And what is this business which calls you away alone?"

Her husband would not say. He said it was a state secret, which did not concern women. She replied she was no child, and would know it. He only laughed, and laughed louder as she burst into a fury; and when she became white with rage, and clenched her little fists, and ground her teeth, and grasped at the knife she wore in her girdle, he lashed the knife out of her hand with a cut of his riding-rod, and bade her women carry her away. "Look to my lady," said he, "and never leave her. Her mother was mad, and she has a touch of the malady." And so he left her, and was off by break of day.

' At break of day Angelica was up too; and no sooner had her husband's horses left the courtyard of the castle than she called for her own, and rode towards the city in the direction in which he had gone. Great crowds of people were advancing towards the town, and she remembered, for the first time, that an execution was about to take place. There had not been one for seven years, so ~~peaceable~~ ~~was our country then~~; there was not even an executioner in the duke's service, for the old man had died, and no one had been found to take his place. "I will see this at any rate," said Angelica; for an execution was her delight, and she remembered every circumstance of the last with the utmost accuracy.

‘As she was spurring onwards she overtook a company of horsemen. It was the young prince and his suite, among whom was riding Lord Max, who took off his cap and saluted her.

‘“Make way for the Lady Angelica!” cried one.

‘“Health to the blushing bride!” said the prince. “What, so soon tired of billing and cooing at Waldberg?”

‘“I hope your grace found the beds soft and the servants obedient,” said Max. “They had my parting instructions.”

‘“They had the instructions of their own mistress,” replied Angelica. “I pray you to let me pass on to my husband, the Lord Wolfgang.”

‘“The Lord Wolfgang will be with you anon,” said the prince. “We were here on the watch for you and him, and to pay our *devoirs* to the loveliest of brides.”

‘“An execution is just such a festival as becomes your ladyship. Make way there! Place for the Lady Angelica! Here is the gallery from which you can see the whole ceremony. The people will be here anon.” And almost in spite of herself, Angelica was led up into a scaffold from which the dismal preparations of the death-scene were quite visible.

‘Presently the trumpets blew from Udolf. The men at arms and their victims came winding down the hill, old Dolchenblitz leading the procession, armed, on his grey charger. “Look at the victims,” said some one by Angelica’s side; “they are as calm as if they were going to a feast.” “See, here comes the masked executioner,” said another, “who bought his life upon these terms.”

‘“He is a noble,” whispered Max to Angelica, “*and he is the greatest swordsman in Europe.*” Angelica did not reply, but trembled very much.

‘Singing their psalms, the Anabaptists mounted the scaffold. The first took his place in the chair, and the executioner did his terrible work. “Here is the head of a traitor,” said the executioner.

‘“*You recognize your husband’s voice, noble Lady Angelica,*” said Max.

‘She gave a loud scream, and fell down as if shot. The people were too much excited by the spectacle to listen to her scream. The rest of the executions went on; but of these she saw nothing. She was carried home to Udolf raving mad. And so it was that Max of Waldberg revenged

his brother's death. They say he was never the same man afterwards, and repented bitterly of his severity; but the Princess Ulrica Amelia Sophonisba Jacqueline vowed that the punishment was not a whit too severe for the traitress who had dared to call her the humpbacked Venus. I have shortened as far as possible the horrors of the *dénouement* of this dismal drama. The executioner returned to Vienna with a thousand crowns and all he had won of Angelica in private. Max gave the father and his unhappy daughter a pension for their lives; but he never married himself, and his estates passed away into another branch of our family.'

'What, are you connected with him, Milchbrod?' said I; 'and is the story true?'

'True. The execution took place on the very spot where you are lying.'

I jumped up rather nervously. And here you have the story of 'The Brother's Revenge; or, The Executioner's Wife.'

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